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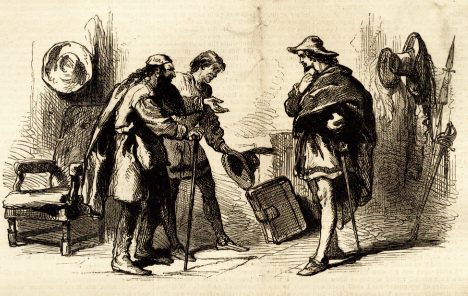

GERALD IN SEARCH OF AN ASSISTANT.

TO A GIRL.

BY GEORGE D. PRENTICE.

The echoes of thy song,
Young minstrel girl, have fallen on my heart,
And answering thoughts, a fair and gentle throng,
To life and being start.

Thy music is a boon
That hushes my worn spirit to its sleep,
And soothes it in its slumber as the moon
The surges of the deep.

A soul of fire is thine,
Thou art a new star mounting in the sky,
Whose beams, in its meridian hour, will shine
Brightly on every eye.

May heaven forever shower
Its blessings on thy spirit pure and true,
As the calm evening sheds on leaf and flower
Its soft and holy dew.

God keep thy soul from gloom,
And may thy life, with joy and beauty blest,
Bear like some tropic stream, a freight of bloom
Upon its placid breast.

May no bright hope e'er spring
Within thy heart to perish unfulfilled,
And may'st thou never feel thy spirit-wing
By autumn-tempests chilled.

Oh, may'st thou e'er remain
As joyous and as beautiful as now,
A song-bird pouring forth her richest strain
From being's loftiest bough.

SILVERTHORNE;

OR,

THE HEIRS OF CHESWOLD MANOR.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BLACK SEAL!

On the afternoon of the fifth day a letter was received from the baronet, which had been posted at Manchester. He said—"I write this by the hand of Willet, being unable myself to guide a pen." But still he assured them that he was hopeful. He sent love to all, and asked them to pray for him. To Owen Murdock, in a postscript, he wrote—"If old Silverthorne has moved into his cot, I earnestly beseech you to show him all the kindness in your power, for I believe he is deserving of it."

This letter did not afford Lorinda much comfort; and she anxiously awaited the next. It came from Litchfield; and the baronet had been at the date of its writing, four days on the road. He was still unable to guide his own pen, save to put his name at the close, which he did with much of his old boldness.

From Lutterworth two days afterwards came another letter "I travel slowly," said Sir Edward, "but I travel safely. I think I am no worse."

It was a week before another missive came, and that was from St, Albans. In two days more a letter came from London. Sir Edward wrote that he had reached the metropolis, and had found comfortable and convenient rooms. "I am now where I can rest," he said, "and I think my prospects are bright." "Your letter," he said to Lorinda, "came in good season, and I have had pleasant dreams over it. I hope all will come out right." This, like its predecessors, was written by the doctor; but Sir Edward had put his signature down with his own hand. It was the baronet's autograph, but not quite so bold and open as the others had been. The letters were crowded, betraying an effort of the hand to hold itself steadily upon the paper. It was not a good sign.

A week passed on, and then the postman came again. This time he brought a letter with a black seal! Lorinda's heart sank when she saw it, for she had a presentiment of its contents. Owen Murdock opened it, for to him was it addressed. It was from Adam Willet. It was short and heavy He wrote that Sir Edward was dead—that he died calmly, and had been buried at Windsor. "It was not the journey that killed him," he wrote, "nor was it entirely the accident which befell him in the vale. He had been failing for years—failing at heart—though his robust frame showed it not so plainly. It was his desire that his mortal remains might finally rest at Cheswold, but they will not be moved until the winter comes."

There were words of love and blessing to the inmates of Cheswold manor house; and something about a will which the baronet had made; but Lorinda Verbrook comprehended only that her beloved guardian was dead, and, as soon as possible, she hastened away to her chamber, where she wept until she was almost sick. In the cool of the evening she wandered alone by the brookside, and near the little shop she met Silverthorne.

"Alas, sweet lady, thou art sad," the old man said.

He spoke so kindly, so softly, and so in tune to her own feelings, that she took his outstretched hand, and rested her wearied, aching head upon his bosom, as though he were to her a tried and trusty friend. He led her to his cot, and sat down by her side.

"I have heard the mournful tidings, my child; and though the sound comes painfully upon my heart, yet I was prepared for it. I know that Sir Edward had anticipated this event."

"How?" asked Lorinda, looking up. "Did he think he would not live?"

"He has said so, lady."

"He did not tell me so."

"Ah,—he would not pain you. There was a bare possibility that he might survive; and while such a possibility was present, of course he would not deprive you of hope. I think he acted wisely. To myself and his physician, and perhaps to Luke Bissell, did he confide his worst fears. But, dear child, be not wholly cast down. To die is the lot of all. Thou art young and strong. Life is before thee, and the foundations of hope and promise are many. If I can help thee, command me. If thou need'st a friend, trust me."

"And who art thou?" the maiden cried, resting her hands upon his shoulders, and gazing fixedly into his face. She spoke quickly and eagerly, as though under an impulse which she could not resist. "O, tell me, that I may know how to trust thee and love thee. I do need a friend; and my heart turns to thee instinctively."

"Then let thy heart have its way," said the old man, persuasively.

"But," pursued Lorinda, still gazing into his face, "the emotions of the heart are subject to other forces than mere instinct. If I am to trust thee in everything, there should be no room for doubt."

"And how can you find room for doubt now?"

"Forgive me, sir, if I am wrong; but, is there not some hidden character? Is there not some story of your life which I do not know? O, forgive me for thus speaking; but I cannot help it. I would trust you, for my guardian bade me so to do; but I have a woman's timidity and a woman's fears."

"Aye—and a woman's curiosity," added Silverthorne.

"You may call it curiosity if you will, sir."

"I do not blame you, child. If I spoke abruptly, it was only from the quick passing of the thought. But—to be serious, and to the point—you have heard my story. Sir Edward must have told you."

"Yes,—he told me of your——banishment——"

"Speak plainly, lady, and call things by their right names. He told you of my transportation?"

"Yes, sir."

"And the circumstances which led thereto?"

"Yes."

"And he told you of my younger days here at Cheswold?"

"Yes."

"Then what more can there be?"

Lorinda hesitated a moment: but finally she answered, with some fluttering of voice:

"I have heard it whispered, sir, that all is not exactly as has been represented; O forgive me again, if I transgress but—I would trust thee."

"I understand," said the old man. He tried to speak calmly, but the quiver of his lip, and the unsteadiness of his hand betrayed that he was not altogether at ease. "Tell me," he added, after a moment's pause, "what you have heard whispered."

"I have heard it whispered," she answered, "that you did not serve out the full term of your transportation—that you must have escaped, and made your way back to England."

"Ah,—is it so said?"

"It is."

"Who says it?"

"Several of the older servants—those who knew you in the years before misfortune came upon you."

"Before misfortune came upon me!" Silverthorne repeated the words mechanically, and a shudder crept over his frame. But he quickly recovered himself. "I do not fully comprehend. Why do they say this?"

"Because they are sure that you have been here in some other character. And I feel it, too. There are features, and tones, and motions, accompanying your presence which can hardly be mistaken."

"I am to understand, then, that the impression is, that I have not served out, honestly, my term of banishment; but that, under cover of some disguise, I spent a season in England which the law supposed I was spending in a penal colony upon the other side of the earth. Is it so?"

"Yes, sir,—it is so said."

"And you fancy that you have seen me thus?"

"I cannot deny it."

The old man arose, and folded his arms upon his bosom. The last gleams of departing day, softened and subdued by the mists of approaching twilight, were resting upon him; and his look was almost sublime. The snow-white hair, falling in graceful waves upon his shoulders, and the silvery beard, sweeping down over his breast, gave to his stalwart form, almost a prophetic character.

"Lorinda Verbrook," he said, slowly and solemnly, "I love not to dwell upon the past; for, as God lives, I believe it is more full of evil done to me than of evil which I have done; and, as a retrospect must always bring to me a spirit of hatred and vengeance, I care not how soon the old book of record is closed. I would gladly preserve the fragrance of the flowers that have bloomed along the way; but I shudder when I remember the cruel thorns. To thee I will be a friend, firm and true; and, if I can give thee counsel, thou art welcome to it; but no more of the times that are gone. If I am to be trusted, it must be for what I am, and not for what I have been. And now—here is my hand. If you can take it, and trust me as I have said, then take it, and I will be to thee as true as mortal can be. If you cannot take it, trusting wholly, with your gaze to the future, then leave me to pray for you in my solitude."

Influenced by a power which seemed almost independent of her own thoughts, the maiden reached forth and took the extended hand—took it in both her own, and gently murmured—

"Pray for me and help me, for I trust thee with all my soul!"

"As God is the Father and Friend of us both, I will serve thee with all my power!" So spoke the old man, and then he led the maiden back to her seat. And after this he talked to her so kindly and so soothingly that her heart was opened to him as it could only be to one who had won its deepest love.

As Lorinda Verbrook wended her way back to the manor house, she was more calm and tranquil than she had been before, since her guardian left her. The influence of Silverthorne's presence had been wondrously potent, and now that she had resolved to trust him, she allowed no more doubts to come between them.

Two days after the reception of the news of the baronet's death, Dr. Willet and Luke Bissell arrived, and them our heroine eagerly questioned concerning her guardian's last hours. They gave her every consolation in their power, and assured her that Sir Edward's end had not been hastened by his journey.

"In fact," said the doctor, "I firmly believe that the jaunt was a benefit to him—much better than opiates. His fate was sealed from the first, and I do not imagine that any amount of bodily rest could have saved him. And, further, he was saved the pain of bidding a dying farewell to those at Cheswold whom he loved. This he had dreaded. He had seen them all—he had blessed them—he had received their dying words of parting, and that was enough. In short, Lorinda, it is best as it is. In the hands of God all is for our highest good. In a few days Sir Edward's will, which his lawyer has safely in charge, will be produced, and after that, I trust it will not be long ere the sky becomes clear again."

Willet spent the night at Cheswold, and in the morning he left for his own home.

Within an hour after the doctor had gone, Gerald Murdock arrived at the manor, and very soon joined his father in the library. He had been gone ever since the day on which the baronet left, and no one had heard from him until now.

"Well, Governor," he said, after he had helped himself to a glass of brandy, "it has all turned out well thus far. I did not write to you, because I thought it safer not to do so, as the post-marks upon my letters might have betrayed the secret of my whereabouts."

"You did just right, my son. Dr. Willet's letters have kept me posted. But I trust you have been cautious."

"No one could have been more so. I hung upon Sir Edward's track from the time he left Cheswold until I saw his mortal remains borne to the chapel at Windsor. Had he lived, and moved about, I would have dogged him still. As it was, I saw all that went on, and I am sure that he received no visitors save such as went upon mere terms of sympathy and friendship. However, he is dead and gone, and our hopes must now depend very much upon his will, for I suppose he has made one."

"Yes," replied Owen. "Doctor Willet tells me that Mr. Arnton has it."

"Aye," resumed Gerald, "I thought as much. When I said that the baronet received no visitors save such as came on mere terms of friendship, I should have excepted old Arnton, for I saw him there, and I knew what his business must be. I am sorry a will has been made, but still we must hope for the best."

"At all events," said the father, "we will wait and hear what the testament is. It may be in our favor You have done well, and I am not sorry that you went. Had Sir Edward lived, I am sure he would have been up to business, but as it has terminated, all may now be safe."

"When Gerald saw Lorinda he was very kind to her, and told her of an extraordinary law case which he had been attending to, and in which he met and conquered some of the best attorneys in Manchester. He spoke of Sir Edward with tears in his eyes, and when he found how easily the maiden's heart was thus reached, he followed up the attack until she really blessed him for his sympathy.

In time Mr. Walter Arnton came up from Preston to read the will of Sir Edward Stanton. Arnton was an old man of three score at least, and had been Sir Edward's attorney for many years. He was an honest, straightforward business man, not brilliant as a lawyer, but shrewd and effective in matters requiring care and attention. He took dinner with the family, and then adjourned to one of the drawing-rooms, where all interested were assembled.

"My friends," the old attorney commenced, in his business-like way, "you may all of you be disappointed in what I shall read to you, though I am sure none of you can find fault. I come to you now, as I was directed to come by the baronet, and I shall produce to you that which was arranged for production at the present time."

Gerald moved uneasily in his seat, and he and his father exchanged anxious glances. They could not comprehend the meaning of this. In the meantime Arnton unfolded the document which he held, and asked those present to give their attention.

"As you will perceive," he said, "this is not Sir Edward's Last Will and Testament, though it is somewhat testamentary in its character."

And thereupon he read it. It was of some length, but yet very simple in its character. The chief announcement was, that the Last Will and Testament had been made, and placed in the hands of the attorney, but that it was not to be opened—the seal was not to be broken—until the expiration of one year and six months from the date of the present instrument. In the meantime Owen Murdock was to be tenant of Cheswold, to use a certain per cent. of the income as he pleased, passing the remainder over to the attorney, quarterly. All the servants at present employed were to be retained, at the rate of pay already established, and none were to be discharged, save at their own request, or for bad conduct. Old Silverthorne was to be respected in his possession of the premises by the river, and he was to have free use of the boats when they were not otherwise engaged. As for the estates of Farworth, those were free and unencumbered, and Lorinda Verbrook was mistress, with full power in her own right, as, with the demise of her guardian, the restraint of her wardship ended. She was to have the use of such apartments at Cheswold as she might desire, to occupy them or to keep them closed, as she pleased.

It was a curious instrument. Did the attorney understand why such a course had been pursued?

"Sir Edward had his own reasons," said Arnton, "and when, at the appointed time, his will shall be opened, those reasons may be apparent to all. Of course I am not at liberty to say more at present, unless it be simply to add that our noble friend certainly did what he deemed most proper. And, really, I see not how any one can find fault. Are you not satisfied, Lady Lorinda?"

"Yes, sir," replied the maiden, wiping her eyes. "He could not have displeased me."

"And you, Mr. Murdock—I trust that you, too, are content."

"Certainly, sir—certainly. O—I find no fault. It was only the strangeness of the thing that struck me. In fact, I am more than satisfied."

"And," added Arnton, since you and I are to work together in a measure, for some months to come, I trust that we shall enjoy each other's confidence."

"Certainly—I hope so."

"And I trust that Cheswold will not suffer under our care."

"It shall not if I can help it."

"Thank you. And now let us be frank in all matters of business, and hope for the best. There are others, beside ourselves, for whose good we are henceforth responsible."

Owen Murdock said "Certainly;" but at that moment his thoughts of weal were confined within very narrow limits.

CHAPTER XIV.

GERALD HAS BUSINESS.

Among the servants at Cheswold there was considerable discussion upon the merits of the disposition which had been made of affairs by their late master; and though not one was found who was willing to blame the baronet, yet they were not entirely pleased with the character of the man who had been placed over them. The more observing ones were fearful that Owen Murdock was not exactly the person to manage the wide domain. Of his capacities for the office they had no doubt; but touching his honesty and integrity they were not so sure.

"It should have been the Lady Lorinda," said the old butler. "She and Mr. Arnton would have worked together for the best good of all concerned, and it would have been a pleasure to serve her."

"That is so," responded the gate-keeper; "but still we have the privilege of leaving if we don't like."

"It isn't much of a privilege, though," returned the butler. "Cheswold is my home—it has been my home for almost three-score years. I was born here, and here have I been reared; and now to be forced to leave it would be almost like dying. No, no—'tisn't much of a consolation—that."

"John Sutton is right," said the forester, alluding to the remarks of the butler. "This is our home, and we won't leave it if we can help it. My father had charge of these forests before me; and I was born beneath their shade; and here I want to spend my days. If Owen Murdock tries to oppress us, we must hang together At any rate, I, for one, will stick by to the last; and the cause of my fellows is my cause; an injury done to any one of you is an injury done to me; and I will help resent it while I live. Mr. Arnton is our friend, and if we work together, I do not think we have much to fear."

So spoke Enoch Barrow, the stout forester; and his companions, when they had heard him, joined him in spirit.

Lorinda Verbrook thought much upon the subject of her guardian's will; and though she had not the least fault to find, yet fear-phantoms were all about her. For the present, however, she did not strive after prospective evil, for she had enough sorrow without that. Still, when she thought of the future, and tried to make it look bright and hopeful, doubts and fears would arise to cloud her hopes. She remained at Cheswold a few days after the visit of the attorney, and then she returned to Farworth. Owen Murdock did not oppose her in the least, but seemed rather anxious to have her understand that she was at liberty to go and come as she pleased.

"I trust," he said, in a smiling, winning way, as she was upon the point of departing, "that you will not remain long at Farworth without visiting us. It will be very lonesome here after you are gone."

From her own pure heart, with its active sympathy and living truth, the maiden gave credit to the man's sincerity; and she told him that she would come when she could. And, furthermore, she would have him call at Farworth. He must come as often as he could. He must feel at home there.

Owen said that he would. He hoped that they should find much of joy and peace in the future; and to that end should he work.

Lorinda had not the disposition to doubt him, and she thanked him for his kind words. Aye, and she thanked him sincerely, for his smile, and his cheer, and his blessing had given her real consolation. She detected not the worthless paste, but fancied that the gleams of light were reflected from a pure stone.

Gerald offered to accompany her on her way, and she did not refuse him. As they rode along he talked with her of the baronet—talked of his virtues, of his goodness, of his gentleness, of his misfortunes, and of his sad fate. He had touched the key to her soul, and her sympathies were all brought forth. And, furthermore, he was careful not to touch any discordant notes. So, when he had seen her safe at Farworth, and was about to turn back, he received a cordial invitation to call as often as he could. It was the voice of the heart, speaking through the impulse of gratitude.

When Gerald reached Cheswold, on his return, it was fairly dark; and after supper he joined his father in the library, were they were sure of being alone and undisturbed. Until the present time they had had no favorable opportunity of conferring together, as nearly every hour of the business season had been occupied in the arrangement of other affairs; but now the opportunity had arrived, and they were anxious to embrace it. While others had been freely talking about the manner in which the estate had been left, they had been thinking deeply, and to some purpose.

Owen Murdock locked the door of the ante-room, thus guarding against the approach of eavesdroppers, and then he returned to the library, and took a seat. He sat in the great oaken chair, upon the soft cushion of which Sir Edward had reclined so often, and his arm rested, for the while, upon the same table.

"Well, Gerald—we have at length met with opportunity for conference. I have been thinking; and I suppose you have been doing the same."

"Yes, Governor; I have thought a great deal, for I have had much to think of. And now, as you are the oldest, will you tell me what point you have arrived at."

"By my life, Gerald, I have arrived at no fixed point. My thoughts have been general, rather than pointing towards any one object. I have been waiting for this conference, in hopes that we might bring matters to some practical issue. Of course there has been a centre about which my thoughts have moved, and that centre has been the will of Sir Edward."

"You mean the will which has not yet been opened?"

"Certainly—that which is not to be opened for a year and six months."

"I understand," said Gerald. "My fancies have taken flight that way, too. You know something of Sir Edward's habits—something of his idiosyncracies—something, perhaps, of his whims and caprices. Can you imagine what may be the drift of that hidden instrument?"

"No, my son—not with any certainty. Only one thing is apparent to me: I think the execution of that will is to depend upon circumstances that are yet to transpire. I am inclined to the opinion that the will, as an instrument of to-day, is not absolute; but that, when it shall be duly opened, it will be found to have reference to the position of parties at that time."

"I think you have hit it, Governor. At all events, so far as that part is concerned, I have no disposition to go farther. To my mind, the evidence in the case warrants no other conclusion. And next comes a more important question: What part am I to play in the drama?"

"Aye, my son—I have asked myself that question repeatedly."

"And with what result?"

"Ah, there you have me."

"But," suggested Gerald, "we have evidence to guide us, even here. I have gained a smattering of law, and can see some things which do not appear directly upon the surface. If my uncle had died without making a will, I, the son of his only sister, should have been his sole heir. In short, in the eyes of the law, I am the only heir to Cheswold. Now, had it been Sir Edward's intention to cut me off peremptorily, he would have done so in a straightforward manner. I think I know him well enough for that."

"You are right, my son," said Owen.

"Then," pursued Gerald, "it follows that I am not thus cut off. *Ergo*, I must be mentioned in the will. And, if I am mentioned, it follows that upon me must fall the responsibility of this delay—that is, I am the cause of it. Why? Because I am the only living person against whom his will can work. Is it not plain?"

"I think you have hit it, my boy."

"I think so, too," responded the young man. "Therefore it is evident enough that my interest in the broad domain of Cheswold is to depend upon something which may transpire within eighteen months from this time. Is it not so?"

"Certainly, it looks so."

"Then," continued the young man, folding his hands, and patting his foot upon the floor in a decisive sort of manner, "I ought to know what that condition is. It is no more than a matter of justice to me."

"Now you come to the point, direct, my son. If we could know what that will contained, we should know how to act. As it is, we may be forced to move in the dark."

"And be checkmated in the end," added Gerald.

"Exactly," responded Owen, thoughtfully.

The young man arose, and walked several times across the floor. At length he stopped, and laid his hand upon his father's shoulder.

"Old Walter Arnton has that will," he said, in a low, musing tone.

"Yes," returned Owen, looking up. "Of course he has it."

"I must see it!"

"Ah!—how?"

"I MUST SEE IT!"

"But, my son, a man of Mr. Arnton's habits must keep such papers very carefully."

"Of course he does; and yet I must see that will!"

Gerald took a few more turns across the room; and then, having helped himself to a glass of brandy, he sat down again.

"I think," he said, speaking slowly and methodically, "that we have reached the end of our tether for the present. Until we can know what is written in that will, we can do no more. My mind is made up. To-morrow I shall leave Cheswold; and, if I return alive, I will bring with me the desired intelligence."

"But, my son," cried the parent, in a tone of apprehension, "do you realize what you undertake?"

"I realize it all."

"But there is more than personal danger—more than present danger. Your very heirship may be jeopardized. Should you be detected in the attempt——"

"Don't be foolish," interrupted Gerald, impatiently. "I know what I undertake; and, above all things else, you may depend upon my caution. The die is cast, and at the work I go. If you have any advice to give, reserve it until morning, for it may now interfere with my own speculations. I think I'll to bed and sleep upon it."

And so the conference ended.

On the following morning Gerald ordered his horse, giving out, as he did so, that he was going to London on business connected with his profession.

"You will be careful," said Owen, with his hand on his son's saddle-bow.

"Pooh! Don't let your fears run so high."

"But I know your excitable temperament, Gerald."

"Say, rather, that you know how fond I am of brandy. But you need not fret. I shall be sparing of distilled liquors while this business is on my hands. When I come back you shall hear some news. Good morning."

Gerald Murdock had resolved that he would see and read the Last Will and Testament of his uncle, if he lived; and, furthermore, he had calculated his chances, and laid his plans. He was in no hurry, for he meant to make his work sure as he went. He first turned his steps towards Preston, which town he reached just as the workmen and work-women were returning to the factories for their labors of the afternoon. He took dinner at one of the taverns, and then sought the residence of Mr. Arnton. As he had expected, and hoped, he found the attorney in his office, though not alone, there being two men present on business. This latter circumstance, however, was rather favorable to our adventurer, as it gave him better opportunity to look about and examine the premises, such being the simple object of his visit. After he had been kindly greeted by the old man, and asked to wait a few moments, he took a seat in a retired corner, and picked up a newspaper.

The dwelling of Walter Arnton was in a quiet part of the town, away from the hum of the busy mills, and from the din of the market-place. It was a brick building, old and substantial, fronting upon a narrow court, with a wing extending back into a small garden; the whole being surrounded by a high, thick brick wall. In this wing was the office, with a large bay window, the casements of which reached to the floor, and opened out upon a narrow verandah overlooking the garden. Upon two sides of the wall hung various plans, and maps, and card-racks, while upon the other side, set deep within the embrace of solid masonry, was a large iron vault, the heavy, triply-riveted door of which was now open. Within this stout safe Gerald saw many drawers that were locked, and many open pigeon-holes filled with carefully folded papers. Somewhere in that iron-bound region he was sure the will must be; and, when that ponderous door was closed, and the big key turned and taken away, the contents seemed safe enough from prying eyes. But the kin of Cheswold was not disheartened.

"Now," said Arnton, as the men with whom he had been engaged, withdrew. "I am at your service."

But Gerald had no business of importance. He was simply on his way to London, and as he found it convenient to stop in the town for dinner, he thought he would call.

"I thought you might have some message to send—something, perhaps, which I could do for you."

Mr. Arnton was thankful for the offer, but he knew of nothing which could be done for him in London.

"You say you have been to dinner?"

"Yes, sir."

"You would have found a welcome at my board, had you seen fit to call."

"Excuse me, sir; but I am fearful of calling upon professional men under such circumstances. From my own experience, I know how valuable their time is, and how harshly comes an interruption upon the few short moments they have to themselves in the bosom of their homes."

"You are right, my dear sir; and I wish that others were as wise. How goes it at Cheswold?"

"As fairly as could be expected."

"And the Lady Lorinda?"

"She is at Farworth, and seems to be growing more content. In fact, all seem verging that way. My father has shown to them that he means to rule for their good, and they are giving him their confidence. But, sir, if you have no orders, I will not intrude upon you longer."

"Do you return to London to pursue your profession?"

"Yes, sir," replied Gerald. He hesitated a moment and then added, with a smile:

"I must carve out my own fortune. There was a time when I rested my hopes upon the munificence of my uncle; but I shall place no great dependence upon that source of help for the time to come. He may, in his will, give me property, and he may not; however, in view of the turn which affairs have taken, I have resolved to create an independence for myself, and then, if other help comes, it will not harm me. You see I can philosophize upon it. I was disappointed at first; and, I am free to confess, somewhat nettled; but a little calm reason has helped me wonderfully."

"Upon my word, sir," responded the old attorney, with real earnestness, "you have taken a wise course; and I sincerely hope that you may succeed to an inheritance of peace and blessedness. You shall have my assistance. Command me when you have need."

Gerald Murdock seemed very grateful; and yet he did not at all overdo the matter. He expressed his thanks in simple words, and then took his leave. In the court he stopped just long enough to take a survey of the premises; and ere long afterwards he was on his way to London.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BUSINESS IS ON FOOT.

Within a low, cramped apartment, half under ground, opening from one of the dark narrow streets of White-chapel, in the great metropolis, sat a dark-featured, dried up old man, poring over the pages of a dingy ledger. There was a counter running around upon three sides of the room, back of which were shelves and lockers, loaded with odds and ends of every sort and description. It was as though every store in London had made a donation, from its rubbish, to this place. Some of the articles were numbered, as though they had been pawned, while others had evidently been bought outright; though the sums lent, or the sums paid, upon such trash, could not have been great. There might have been articles of value in that old man's keeping; but, if there were, they were not exposed to view. It was night, as we thus look into this dingy hole, and a large oil lamp, burning with a sickly flame, and emitting a foul smoke, was suspended over a low desk in one corner, casting upon the collected heaps of rubbish a glare which was not at all calculated to enhance their appearance of value. With his back to this desk, and the lamp over his left shoulder, the old man sat; and as he ran his dirty finger along over the page, he reckoned the figures in his mind. He was thus engaged when the sound of feet, coming down the steps from the street, arrested his attention; and presently the door was opened, and a stranger, closely muffled in a spanish cloak, with a slouched hat drawn down over his brow, stepped quietly in, and advanced to the counter.

"Is this Mr. Devendorf?" the new-comer asked, addressing the keeper of the shop.

"Yah—dat ish my name." The old rascal put aside his book, and arose from his seat. "Dit you vants to puy anytinghs?"

"No," replied the stranger, still concealing his face, "I came here to find a man."

"Ah—who vould you fint, ma tear?"

"A man who passes by the name of Bill Swinet."

"A man by te name of Bill Swinet! Ma consciansh! you pe mishtakens, sir. Dar pe no shush man here."

"Don't be afraid of me, Isaac. I know what I am after. I must see Bill to-night."

"Musht, eh?"

"Yes, I must. I have business for him. If he is here, call him; and if he is not here, I will wait till he comes."

"If he ish here! Cot plesh ma heart, don't you see dat he ishn't here, ma tear?"

"Listen, a moment," said the visitor, with some show of impatience. "If you think I am a beak or a spy, you are much mistaken. I know you very well—I know your business. Don't start, for I have no intention of harming you. I have come solely upon business between myself and Bill Swinet; and, furthermore, that business is to be to our mutual advantage."

"Vatsh pe your name?"

"Never mind my name. As my business is not with you, it cannot matter."

"Cot plesh me, ma tear shentilmansh, I hopes you ton't mean to pe ugly"

As the Jew spoke he turned to the desk, by the side of which he had been standing, and moved his hand towards a heavy pistol that lay there.

"Hold," cried the stranger, in a peremptory manner. "If your thoughts run in that fashion, you cannot know with whom you have to deal. Look." And thus speaking, he opened his cloak, and displayed a couple of weapons that were not to be disregarded. "But," he added, as he saw the Jew cower, "neither you nor I would use such tell-tale things in this place, save in the last extremity. If I had meditated harm, I shouldn't have come here alone. So now be reasonable, and answer me as I desire. Is Bill Swinet in your house?"

"No," replied the old man, promptly.

"Will he be here to-night?"

Isaac hesitated.

"By the spirits of your fathers, old man, if you do not answer me, it shall be worse for you! Speak!—Will Swinet be here to-night?"

The Jew evidently took his visitor to be not only a desperate character, but, perhaps, a great villain; and, in this latter character, he seemed inclined to trust him.

"Don't pe in a fret, ma tear. If you know ash mush ash you says, ten you musht know dat a frient of Bill Swinet voult pe careful how he shpoke apout him. Shoost sets town, an' vait—sets town an' vait. Here ish a papersh, reat it till Bill comsh."

The stranger took the paper, and sat down upon an old lumber box; and presently the Jew resumed his seat by the desk, and picked up his ledger again. Yet it was plain to be seen that neither was very much interested in the occupation which he pretended to be following; for the keeper of the shop kept one eye most of the time upon his visitor; while the latter was careful that his host did not make any movement without his notice. Ere long, however, they were both relieved. It may have been half an hour after the stranger took the paper, that a third party entered the place. It was a small, lithe-built man; of middle age; with a sharp, gray eye; light, flaxen hair, which curled handsomely about his well-formed head; and habited in the garb of a gentleman. He did not enter by the street door, but came in from behind a row of projecting shelves, by a way which had not before been apparent. He stopped when he saw the visitor.

"How is this, Isaac?" he demanded. "I heard no voice—no signal."

"Dat vash pecause I didn't hear you," replied the Jew, starting up. "But I guesh dare's no harm. Dish shentilmansh vantsh to see you."

"Wants to see me?"

"If this is Bill Swinet," said the stranger, moving forward, and speaking as though he were at home, "I have business with him."

The new-comer regarded the speaker with a scrutinizing glance.

"Who are you?"

"It matters not now, and here. Are you the man?"

"And if I am?" The words were accompanied by the drawing of a pistol.

"If you are," returned the stranger, taking no notice of the weapon, "I have business with you. I wish to present a matter which may work to the advantage of us both. Will you come with me to the tavern across the way?"

"Well," said the other, in slow, measured tones, putting up his pistol, and regarding his interlocutor with another searching look, "I am Bill Swinet, and I will go with you. So lead the way as quick as you please."

"But—mines tear Bill," interposed the Jew, fearfully, "vats you know of dish mansh, eh?"

"Don't be a fool, Isaac. I know him well enough. I'll see you again before I go to bed."

"Ah—oho—he ish a pal, eh—von of ush?"

"He is a gentleman. Now look to your store, and keep your old eyes open sharp.—Come, sir, —I am ready."

This last remark was addressed to the stranger, who turned from the place, and, having gained the street, led the way to an old tavern which stood at no great distance, where he called for a private room, and ordered brandy and water. Swinet followed him without any appearance of hesitation; and when they reached the apartment which had been ordered, and had closed the door after the retiring waiter, he helped himself to brandy, and then sat down.

"If I am not mistaken," said the mover of this business, "you remarked to the old Jew that you knew me."

"Yes, sir," replied Swinet, with a nod. "Of course I knew you, or I shouldn't have come with you. Not, however, that any fear could have prevented; but I like to have my own way. I have seen you about the Middle Temple, and at Lincoln's Inn, where I think you practised something of law. And then, again, I have seen you where something else than law was the practice. I am talking with Gerald Murdock."

"You are right, sir," said Gerald, throwing his cloak from his shoulders, and nodding in a familiar sort of way; "and if I refused my name to old Devendorf, it was because I did not choose to show my hand to one who could be in no way interested in my game."

"That's just where you were wise. And now to business, for I have not long to spare."

"I shall speak so that you will understand me," remarked Gerald, draining his glass a second time, and then pushing the bottle away.

"If you know me, and would engage my attention, of course you will," returned Swinet, also putting his glass away.

"Then," commenced the young barrister, "here it is: I have come to London to find a man to do a job for me. I applied to a friend in whom I could trust, and he recommended me to find Bill Swinet. Suffice it for me to say here that I have been most cautious in thus hunting you up."

"You need not labor to convince me of that," said Swinet; "for," he added, with a smile, "your own safety is my pledge. Proceed."

Gerald cast his eyes about the room, and then resumed,—

"I have a job which I wish you to do for me. It is to enter the office of an attorney; open his iron vault; and find a will which is deposited there."

"Ah,—now you talk."

"Can you do it?"

"If the vault is near the surface of the earth, of course I can."

"It is in Preston."

"What—away in Lancashire?"

"Yes."

"But that is a week's journey."

"You shall be paid for your time."

"Is there money in the vault?"

"No. Or, if there is, it must not be touched. The attorney must not know that anything has been disturbed there. I must read the will, and then have it put back exactly as it was found."

"Aha,—I begin to comprehend," said Swinet, drumming upon the table with his fingers. "I heard that Sir Edward Stanton died not long since. I think I saw a notice of his death in the Gazette. He was a relative of yours?"

"Yes,—my uncle."

"And this is his will?"

"Yes."

"It isn't published yet?"

"No,—and will not be for over a year."

"Now I understand. You wish to know what your prospects are."

"Aye; and not only so, but I wish to know if my prospects are dependent upon circumstances over which I can have any control. I am free, sir."

"So I see. And now let me understand one thing more. Does this attorney sleep in his office, or does any one sleep there?"

"No. The office is in a rear wing of his house; and he evidently depends for the safety of his papers upon the strength of his vault."

"Couldn't you find any one in Preston, or Manchester, to do the work for you?"

"I might, but I did not wish to trust my secret out quite so near home. I preferred to come to London, being assured that I should there find my man. And now, sir, if you are the accomplished professor which has been represented, you can help me. What say you?"

"When must it be done?"

"As soon as possible."

"And the pay?"

"I have not fixed upon any sum," returned Gerald, hesitatingly.

"It should be a good round one, for such a jaunt, and such a work."

"I mean that it shall be a good one. But, my dear fellow, you must remember that I am not sure of any direct benefit. It is only a venture of discovery, which may turn out wholly empty."

"I see," said the burglar. He reached over and drew his glass back; and having drank a little more brandy, he continued,—"I think we can arrange the matter satisfactorily. Barristers and attorneys, you know, and sergeants-at-law, call for retaining fees. That is—their presence in the case is worth something. Now here it is, as it has arranged itself in my mind. In the first place, you are to pay all the expenses. For one hundred pounds I will go with you to Preston. For another hundred I will make an entrance to the office, and attack the vault. If I am successful, and find the will, I must have four hundred pounds,—that is—two hundred in addition to the sum before named. And now for the supposition that a knowledge of the contents of this will is to be of material benefit to you. Of course I shall read the document, and shall be able to make up my own mind. If such shall prove the case, you must pay me just one thousand pounds. How is that?"

Gerald Murdock was not a bantering man; nor was he a man likely to back down from a position once taken. He had seen enough of Mr. Bill Swinet to be assured that he was just the individual for the emergency; and he had also seen enough to satisfy him that Mr. Swinet said just about what he meant. He reflected awhile, and then drew his glass towards him, and filled it with brandy; after which he pushed the bottle over to his companion, who followed suit.

"When I first spoke," said Gerald, "I said that I should be frank and plain. Of course you have been the same."

Swinet nodded.

"Then I accept your terms; and here's to our success."

They drained their glasses, and then the burglar extended his hand.

"I shall be at your service at any hour after the sun rises to-morrow morning."

"Then meet me here to-morrow evening, ready for a start."

The hour was set, and the twain then separated; Swinet returning to the Jew's, while Gerald made his way to a club-room, where he won two hundred pounds at dice.

At the appointed hour, on the following evening, they met as they had agreed, and Swinet said he was ready for the journey.

"Have you all the tools necessary for the work?" asked Gerald.

"Yes," replied the other, pointing to the small portmanteau he had brought with him. "They are in there. It requires but few tools for such business, if one only knows how to use them. If you never picked a lock, probably you could not force the door of the attorney's vault with all the tools in the world,—that is, with successful secresy."

"I am pretty well aware of that," admitted Gerald; "or I should not have come so far for help."

They took a glass of brandy, and then sat down to arrange for the journey.

"We had better not travel together," suggested Gerald.

To which Swinet said, "Of course not."

"And yet we should not be far apart," the barrister continued. "The mail coach for Saint Albans and Northampton starts at sunrise on the morrow. If you will take that, I will try the saddle, and join you at Northampton to-morrow evening. I shall ride as far as Barnet to-night. What say you?"

Swinet was satisfied with the arrangement, and agreed to be on hand, if the mail did not fail. Gerald offered him money, but he did not need it.

"I have enough for present use," he said, "and prefer not to travel with more. I will keep an account of my expenses, and hand them in when we settle."

Very well. Another glass, and they separated. Gerald Murdock rode to Barnet, where he spent the night; and on the following morning he was in the saddle early, and reached Northampton before dark. Half an hour afterwards the mail coach arrived, and Bill Swinet with it. Another consultation was held; and, as Gerald was a little tired of the saddle, it was arranged that he should take the mail route by Leicester and Derby, while the other went by the way of Litchfield. Thus they would meet again at Manchester.

They went, as they had agreed, and on the third day they met again. At Manchester Gerald resumed the saddle, and on the next night he and Bill Swinet slept in the same inn at Preston.

Contrary to the general rule in such cases, the dreams of the recreant kin of Cheswold were far from being troublesome ones. In fact, they were particularly cheering; for he dreamed that he saw the will of his dead uncle, and that the path to full possession of the broad domain, with all its wealth and honors, was made plain before him.

Prophetic dream!

However, it is one thing to discover a path; but quite another to follow it out.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

VERACITY AND TRUTH.

There are two sorts of truth, which language does not completely distinguish. The one, indeed, you may always keep clear and distinct, by substituting the word veracity; which is confined, I believe, to our communications with others, and is opposed to lying, not to error; with regard to which I will only say here, that we must learn the meaning of words in general, and attend to the choice of them at the moment, so as not to return to the constant excuse of silly people: "Well, if that is not what I said, it is what I meant." Veracity, then, is the telling other people what we believe to be the fact. But the other sort of truth is the taking care to believe nothing to be the fact but what is the fact; and among other things, or, I should say, above all other things, to get a correct idea of what really passes in our own minds—not to deceive ourselves; for, if we do, we must, though we do not wish it, deceive others. Most people think there is no difficulty at all in this, or any doubt about it; but, on the contrary, it is, of all things that we have the power to do at all, the most difficult to do completely.

DR. PHILIP AND I;

OR,

A GIRL'S PIQUE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

My lover, Dr. Philip, was not at the party. He had absented himself from me for nearly a month, until that very afternoon, and when he called to ask me to go to the party *with him*, I had turned coldly away. Perhaps that was the reason he was not now present. I didn't care if it was.

I had never liked Mark Lane, but I flirted desperately with him that night; and before we reached home he was my accepted lover, and I had promised that the spring time should see me his wife.

The necessity for acting was over, when I had entered our house, and my sister Susy was astonished to see me throw myself down before the red, glowing fire that awaited us, and give way to a burst of passion that shook my frame like a violent convulsion.

Dear sister! She raised my head, and pillowed my burning brow upon her loving heart, as she knelt beside me, and strove with all the arts of affection to soothe me, and to learn the cause of my grief.

"I can guess it," she whispered, at last. "I have seen what Dr. Philip is to you, and *do not wonder that you are overcome by the tidings of his dangerous illness.*"

"His illness!" I cried, raising myself to look in her face, for my fate seemed to hang upon her words.

"Yes, that before he reached home this afternoon he burst a blood-vessel in a violent attack of the cough which has *confined him to the house for the last three or four weeks.* To-day was the first time he had ventured out," she added, as she saw how I hung upon her words.

He had been sick, and I had never known it. He had risked health, perhaps life, to see me, and I had repulsed him by coldness. And while he lay dying, perhaps, I had carried my revenge for a fancied slight so far as to sacrifice myself, and to destroy his happiness in wrecking my own.

These thoughts rushed through my mind, as I knelt, still gazing at my sister's face. A sickening apprehension of the fate of the man I loved, a fierce hate of him whose wife I had promised to become, possessed my whole being simultaneously. I remembered no more, was conscious of nothing, until I awoke to hear a sound as of the murmur of many waters in my ears, and to see the kind, frightened faces of my mother and sister bending over me, while the odor of aromatic essences filled the room.

Next morning I could not rise. My limbs seemed weighted with lead, and my head suddenly grown to an enormous size, and in the paradoxical condition of being at once light and heavy. My father said I had taken cold going sleigh-riding, and recommended "herb tea," the universal panacea. My mother, wiser than he, saw that the illness was mental, and though, I fancy, she questioned Susy, she only spoke to me in those low, soft tones, that are so inexpressibly soothing to racked nerves, of the common topics of the sick-room.

Two visitors broke the outward monotony of this long day, which I spent tossing and thinking. Mark Lane came to visit my parents, and, in country parlance, to "ask consent" to our engagement; and Julius Hall burst into the embarrassed interview, with his loud voice turned to the saddest cadences it had ever known, as he told the story of Dr. Philip's dangerous illness, and begged my mother to go and see him at the boarding-house, where he lay almost without care.

My father came in to inquire, with wondering tones in his voice, if I "really wanted to marry Mark Lane, and what he should tell him, anyhow?" and when I had given for answer, that there must be nothing more said about it until I was well again, my mother entered softly to say that she was "going to the village; Julius Hall had called in, and she could ride over in his cutter." I knew where she was going, but dared not speak.

A week passed away. I could leave my bed, but while my brain burned and seethed in the intensest activity of thought, an almost mortal languor pervaded my limbs, an inertness that deprived me at once of the wish and the power of motion. In the meantime my mother had come and gone between Dr. Philip's bedside and her home, and each day Julius Hall dashed up to our door, with crash and jingle, to bring us tidings of his friend. And one evening he told, with his boisterous voice subdued by grief almost to a whisper, that the life in that chamber of pain hung but by a thread, and that ere the morning dawn the fate of the sufferer would, in all human probability, be decided.

These tidings roused my dormant energies. Hitherto I had been content to suffer in silence, not daring to overleap the barrier that my own hands had raised between me and my beloved. But the longing grew this night beyond my control, to look once more upon the beloved face in life—to catch, if I might, the faintest glance or whisper of forgiveness. I waited only until the household had retired, and then, wrapping myself in shawls, stole out into the icy air.

With delirious haste I fled along the snow-covered road that led to the village. No living thing beside was astir that bitter night. It was past midnight when I reached Dr. Philip's boarding-house, and stood panting before its door. It was unfastened, and pushing it open, I stole noiselessly up the stairs toward the room in which a light, burning dimly, had told me the sick man lay. The door upon the landing was ajar, and leaning against the lintel, as I tried to still my trembling, I looked in. On the bed lay the still form of Dr. Philip, the face white as the pillow it pressed. My mother watched him from an arm-chair drawn near, the woman of the house slumbered in another, and upon the sofa lay the attending physician with a handkerchief thrown over his head, and apparently "catching the nap" he doubtless needed.

My mother closed her eyes and leaned back, with an air of weariness on her anxious face. This was my time. I could steal in unobserved, and in a moment I was kneeling beside the pillow, where that pallid face lay so motionless.

No sound had marked my entrance; none of the watchers had detected my presence. But there was one whose intuitions could not fail to betray me. Suddenly the white eyelids of the sufferer lifted. His dark eyes fixed themselves on mine. A gleam of gladness lit their languid depths, a faint exclamation of joy parted the pale lips, and the thin arms were lifted feebly, as if to encircle me in an embrace of welcome. No words were needed. I drew the dear head to my bosom, and pressed a kiss upon the broad brow, a kiss of peace and reconciliation. Joy and love flashed from Dr. Philip's eyes as they rested on mine, then the gleam faded into an expression of ineffable content, and he slept.

When the warm, sunny days of spring had come round, Dr. Philip was well; and it was then that I became his wife, and the love that my folly had periled met its reward. Mark Lane, long my dread, had withdrawn his suit, averring that he "wouldn't have a girl, no-how, that had gone to take care of another fellow when he was sick."

THE more we help others to bear their burdens the lighter our own will be.

IF YOU LOVE ME, SAY SO.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

Your eyes, dear one, are like the stars
  Within the heavens shining;
Your tresses fair around your brow
  Are delicately twining;
And as they fall upon your neck,
  They fairy like do play so;
That I can but this question ask,—
  "Oh, if you love me, say so."

Your mouth is like a rose bud, love,
  With rows of pearl adorning;
Your breath is like the sweet perfume
  Of a fair summer morning;
But as I gaze upon your charms,
  My trembling heart does ache so,
I can but still the words repeat—
  "Oh, if you love me, say so."

The fragrant roses, as you pass,
  Though in their bloom and beauty;
Within their petals shrink and gaze,
  And deem it but their duty;
For they are envious of your charms,—
  Then why do you delay so?
Oh, why not banish all my fears,
  And if you love me, say so?

RAFTING ON THE "WISKONS."

The Pineries of Wisconsin have been, and still continue to be the source of much of the wealth of this flourishing young State, giving direct employment to between three and four thousand persons, and supplying a great portion of the Mississippi valley with the choicest lumber.

The persons engaged in it, on the upper Wisconsin River, are not only men of means, being extensive capitalists, but they possess all the requisite qualifications for success in any branch of business. Intelligence, enterprise, and indomitable perseverence,—characteristics indispensible in any pursuit,—belong in an eminent degree to the Wisconsin lumbermen; and in all respects they will bear favorable comparison with any other class of business men in this country, or elsewhere.

There are many rapids and falls on the Wisconsin river, which until they were navigated by these intrepid men, were deemed by the Indians unapproachable. The first below the forks of the river are called by the Chippewas Wobojewun, or Narrow Falls;—then come the "Brearbeaux," or Grand Father Bull Falls—the largest on the Wisconsin, called by the Indians Ko-naje-wun, or Long Falls. These last are two or three miles in length, with three perpendicular cataracts of several feet, and the whole together form a descent of about one hundred feet, down which the maddened waters leap and rush with a fearful velocity, and their hoarse voices may frequently be heard for miles. According to Indian tradition, a great spirit presides over those falls, to which on their passages of the portage they always make propitiatory offerings of tobacco, powder and whiskey.

After the Grand Father Bull Falls, come the rapids having only the Indian name of *Sa-se-je-wun*,—next, "*New Woods Rapids*,"—then, *Jemmy Bull Falls, Trap Rapids, Big Bull Falls, Little Bull Falls, Red Cedar Rapids, Grant's Rapids*, and lastly, *Whitney Rapids*,—while below there is the dangerous cañon passage of the "*Dells*"—as much dreaded at times, by the raftsmen, as any other portion of the river.

Over *all* these dangerous Falls and rapids *much* of the lumber of the Wisconsin pineries has to be conducted, by the fearless pilots, and their men; and when the risks are taken into consideration, and the many losses by the way—by the breaking up of the rafts, and their being caught upon the rocks of the falls, and from other causes, to say nothing of the frequent sacrifice of the lives of some of these gallant fellows—the wonder is that the staple is furnished to our hands in the towns and cities as cheap as it is.

The men who pass their lives in this dangerous pursuit, meet with a variety of incidents, which like those in the life of the sailor, finally wed them to it, so that they leave it only when forced do so by the infirmities of age, or from some other disabling causes.

During a recent trip through the northern portion of the State, I was detained several days by a storm, in one of the many villages on the Wisconsin river, where it was my good fortune to put up at a tavern kept by one of these ex-raftsmen. He had been a pilot, he said, for upwards of twenty years; and during my sojourn with him, the old man narrated to me many of the stirring adventures and incidents of his life on the river. One of them, as illustrative of the danger of the business in which he had been engaged, I will relate in his own words.

"I run the Wiskons," said he, "five years as a common hand, before I had larned the river, and the way to handle rafts. After that time I reckoned I had larnt enough to start as a pilot; and begun to do jobs for the pinery men on my own terms. Them were pretty tough times, sir, and it was a rough business we were engaged in, especially when I first undertook it—for what with the falls and the rapids, that in some parts of the river run at the rate of thirty miles an hour—the sandbars that changed with every rise and fall of the treacherous stream, and the snags, and the pesky Winnebagoes, more treacherous even than the old Wiskons—there was mighty little rest for us—we had to keep our eyes skinned day and night. Many is the raft I helped to run below the Dells, with a wooden wall built around its sides, to dodge behind, and let drive at the rascally Injuns, who claimed the river as their own, and demanded toll for the passage of it.

"In them days the boss pilots used sometimes to clear as high as forty dollars a day on the big rafts, and it was money hard earned. 'Twasn't every man you met could do the job then, nor was it every man that had the spunk to face all the dangers of the river and the Injuns.

"The first time I had charge of a raft and a gang of men was in the spring of 1832. It happened in this way: A party of us, who had been running the river for a couple of seasons with Sam Randall, who was reckoned the best boss on the Wiskons, went up to take a job at the new mills on Whitney's rapids. After we had got there, and had nearly finished the cribbing of our raft, Sam was taken down with the billious fever. It was an unlucky circumstance for him, for he had already contracted to deliver the lumber at Dubuque in thirty days, if the river kept up. So the raft must be started at any rate; and Sam gave me the charge of it. 'Hempstead,' said he to me, when he had sent for me to his shanty, 'you see, my lad, I'm laid up; it's out of the question to think of losing this fine rise'—(for you know, sir, the old river was booming)—'and I suspect there'll be trouble with them cussed Winnebegs, before the raft gets through; and what's more, you know, Hempstead, I'm under a thirty days' contract. Now, my boy, will you boss the job? If so, I'll double your wages, and recommend you for a pilot.'

"'But, Sam,' said I, 'there's older and better hands in the gang than I am, why not give it to them?'

"'Cause,' he answered, 'it's something more than a pilot I want this run; it's a man that can boss the raft, and boss a fight with them cussed red skins too, for I'm greatly mistaken in the signs we seed along the river, as we come up, if they don't mean to give us trouble, and you'r the chap for that, Hempstead. Will you do it?'

"'Yes!' said I, 'I'll do it, Sam, or die in the attempt'—for you see, sir, I was kinder proud of the good opinion he had of me; and the next morning I reported to him that I was ready to cast off the lines.

"Well sir, we started down the river, with the prospect of a first rate run—the water was just right, with all the sandbars out of sight. I had ten good stout fellows, all used to the work, and with myself made eleven. We were all well armed, and knew, too, how to use the rifle. But the fact was, I thought that Sam Randall was rather too scarey, with the fever on him, and I didn't believe the Injuns would give us any trouble. But I thought it best to follow his orders, and kept my eyes skinned.

"We had a good run for several days, without any signs of the Injuns being about, till we reached the mouth of White creek, when on landing to camp for the night, we found a peeled bass-wood daubed with blood. This was a sign the sneaking Winnebegs had left to any passing red skins that they had started upon the war path. However, we stopped there all night; but I kept up a guard till day light, and then went to work fixing up a breastwork upon the raft in case of an attack from these rascally cut-throats.

"By noon of that day, as we came round the bend, in sight of the mouth of the Lemonweir, we discovered the smoke of the camp-fires on the banks of that stream; and when we opened the mouth, we found more than a dozen canoes upon the river, each carrying five or six of them bloody Winnebegs, while we could see scores of the red imps of Satan, dodging among the trees and bushes on the banks.

"Well, thinks I, boys, we're in for a fight now, sure enough; and shouting to Pat Manning, a big, raw-boned, fearless Irishman, to take the up-stream steering oar, while I managed the other, I ordered the other boys to lie low behind the breastworks, and pick off the foremost Injuns in the canoes, should they attempt to board us. As soon as we had got opposite them, the savages on the banks raised a fierce warwhoop, which was joined by them in the river, and opened fire upon us. The bullets rattled thick and fast about Pat's head and mine; but we kept the raft in the middle of the current, and drifted on without returning their shots. We were saving our powder and lead for them painted dogs in the canoes; for we knew they meant to board us, if we would let 'em.

"Well, sure enough, before we had got out of range of the Injuns on the shore, the raft came to a sudden stand still in the middle of the river. My eyes had been so occupied in watching them, that I did not see the *boom* the cussed devils had rigged clear across the stream, before we had near run upon it. Letting go the steering oar, I caught up an axe, and jumping upon the boom, began to cut it loose. I had struck but a few blows when a bullet struck me, and shattered the bone of my right arm, and the axe dropped into the water. The same instant a wild, prolonged warwhoop rang over the water, and looking round I saw the canoes sweeping down upon us, and the Injuns in 'em pouring their shots into us. Pat Manning, seeing me struck, ran towards me; but the poor fellow never reached me—he fell upon the raft, with a shot through his head. Leaping upon the raft, I yelled to the men behind the breastworks to give it to them. The order was obeyed, and a dozen savages fell back upon the bottoms of their canoes, killed or wounded. This slackened the speed of the Injuns for a moment; but by the time the boys had reloaded, they were upon us, when another dozen of the rascals were shot down.

"Yelling like so many mad demons, they now leaped upon the raft, and it became a hand-to-hand fight. I tell you what, sir, if there ever was good fighting, it was then; for, sneaking cowards as the Winnebegs are, I must give them the credit of standing up to their work then like men. Faint from the loss of blood, and the pain of my broken arm, I was of no use to the boys. For some minutes them nine brave fellows fought more than five to one. But they were strong, desperate men, and used their knives and the weapons of the Injuns right skillfully. They soon cleared the raft. But three more of my boys were stretched upon it, covered with the carcasses of the stinking painted-skins. We were scarcely clear of the howling Injuns, however, than the rest on 'em on the shore started to join the others in fresh canoes. Seeing this, Jack Runnel snatched up another axe, and cutting loose the boom, let the raft drop down the stream, while the six remaining boys kept cracking away at the Injuns till we got out of their reach. The fight did not last more than fifteen minutes altogether, but in that time we had lost four good men, and I was badly wounded. But it was some gratification to us to tumble into the muddy current of the Wiskons twenty-three of the dead and dying redskins. Three miles below the mouth of the Lemonweir, on the right bank of the river, we buried our comrades in a single grave. A lone oak tree, that stretches its scraggy limbs over the stream, marks the spot. Many a time since then have I stopped there, and repaired the rude enclosure that surrounds both tree and grave. Even the Winnebegs respect the spot, for there lie the remains of four brave men.

"My force was now reduced to six men, to manage the raft, and the most dangerous navigation yet before us. The Dells were a little distance before us, where the swollen current of the booming river rushed with the speed of a race-horse through a narrow defile, whose smooth rocky sides in some places almost meeting overhead, had been battered by the fragments of many a valuable timber raft. The course through this narrow gorge was so crooked that in the distance of half a mile, we would have to run to every point of the compass. None but the most skillful pilots had before ever attempted the thundering passage.

"But there was no alternative, and wounded as I was, and as short of hands, we must make the desperate attempt. The only thing in my favor was the fact that the river had been falling for the two last days, giving us more room through the defile. With my full force of men I should have run no great risk, but as it was I dreaded the result.

"Soon we heard the roaring of the current through the Dells, and after running round a bend, we found ourselves rushing into them.

"It was like leaping into the jaws of destruction, for the heavy raft, under the guidance of only six men, was tossed like a shingle upon the wild current. Our strength was insufficient to keep her from the rocks, and she was driven sidewise into the crooked channel, till both ends being entangled in the cliffs, she was thrown edgeways upon the rushing tide, completely damming up the piling waters, till their weight burst through the frail barricade, and sent the fragments heaving and tossing through the fearful gorge. The portion of the wreck to which I found myself clinging, when we escaped from the chasm, constituted the largest part of the raft; but the foremost cribs, on which was Jack Runnel and one other man, had been dashed into splinters, and the poor fellows had sunk forever in the eddying whirlpool at the outlet of the Dells.

"After this catastrophy I found myself upon the raft with only four men to finish the run. But fortunately for us, we had no more bad river; and, as good luck would have it, before I reached the mouth of the Wiskons, I found a stranded raft of boards which more than made good to our owners the loss at the Dells. I sold the lumber in good time, realizing large profits, to the millers; and, after stopping at Dubuque a few weeks for the recovery of my broken arm, I returned to the pinery with the proceeds of the sales. Sam Randall had recovered, and for many years after, we were partners in piloting on the river.

"The attack of the Winnebegs upon us, was the opening act of the Black Hawk War, and I now draw a generous pension, for the ugly wound I received then, on my first trip as a pilot of the Wiskons."

IN THE LAST TIME.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"An opportunity like this doesn't come to a man every day. Go in, and win; that is my advice."

The speaker was past middle age; and he who listened had made the record of about an equal number of years in his Book of Life.

"The stock will double on its present quotation in less than sixty days, Mr. Cushing," pursued the speaker, with ardor. "I've given you a hint of what is doing, and a hint only; but, take my word for it, the stock will go up like a balloon. It's down to twenty now; but it will range between the thirties and forties in a month."

"And go down faster than it went up, Mr. Slocum," was answered.

Mr. Slocum shrugged his shoulders, and looked arch and knowing.

"Of course, you'll be out of danger. Forewarned, forearmed. It's a 'fancy,' I know. But there's a game up, and I happen to have seen the winning cards. Take ten thousand dollars of this stock now, and in thirty days you may sell out at fifteen or twenty thousand. The thing's as sure as death. There's not a particle of risk. The stock's been at twenty for the last year, and can't get below that figure. You can sell at twenty-five or thirty, while it's on the rising numbers, if you don't care to wait longer for higher chances."

"If I understand you," said Mr. Cushing, "there is no solid basis for the anticipated rise."

"None at all; but that's no concern of your's or mine. We don't operate for a rise; but only take advantage of what we know is going to be."

"After sixty days the stock will fall."

"Yes; and then stand from under, is the word. You'll not find me the owner of a share."

"Somebody will lose."

"Of course."

"And be swindled, of course," said Mr. Cushing.

"You may call it by what name you please. But that isn't the question now. Go in and win's the word."

"This winning, I think you said, just now, was as sure as death?"

"Death sure, Mr. Cushing!"

"The remark has set me to thinking, Mr. Slocum."

"Ah! What of your thoughts?"

"There is a last time coming for us all."

"So the preachers say." Mr. Slocum shrugged his shoulders, in a way peculiar to himself.

"When some of the 'fancies' will rule at very low figures, I apprehend. For one, I should not like to hold them largely. I'm afraid their value would be light among the treasures we are commanded to lay up in heaven."

"You're too serious, Mr. Cushing. I don't see what this going in on a rising market has to do with treasures in heaven. We're not talking about dying, but living. The stock will move up in spite of any thing you or I can do; and for the life of me, I can't see where the harm is in taking advantage of a rise."

"All that I would gain, somebody else must lose," said Mr. Cushing.

"Of course."

Mr. Cushing shook his head. "It won't suit me, friend Slocum. I should be certain to hear of some duped and unfortunate loser on the very stock I sold as a fair article, when I knew it to be valueless above a certain rate. If I were to buy at twenty, I'm afraid my conscience would never permit me to sell at thirty or forty, when I knew the purchaser would be swindled out of half his money."

"You're too squeamish, Mr. Cushing! I call myself an honest man, and a Christian man also. And for the life of me, I can't see any harm in taking advantage of a rising stock, 'fancy' or no 'fancy.'"

"Excuse me, Mr. Slocum," said the other, "but your remark about being a Christain man leads me to say, that I'm afraid Christianity hangs very lightly on the conscience of a stock speculator."

"Did you never speculate in stocks, Mr. Cushing?" The interrogator frowned a little. He felt the remark as rather personal.

"Yes."

"What about the Christianity of your conscience, ha?"

"It hung too lightly, sir; too lightly. I've gone in, a few times, on the rising market, and won. But for every dollar gained, I made a loss in another direction."

"Ah! That was unfortunate."

"So I felt it to be."

"You had one consolation, Mr. Cushing."

"What?"

"The stock speculations saved you."

"How so?"

"Of course, the misfortunes you speak of, had no connexion with them; so what you lost by one hand you made up with the other."

"On the contrary, Mr. Slocum, they were intimately connected; and the losses were in consequence of the speculations."

"That's a little remarkable."

"But no less true, sir."

"What was the nature of these losses?"

"There are two kinds of riches, Mr. Slocum—earthly riches and heavenly riches. Gold and good. I gained gold, but lost good. In securing earthly treasure, I laid up just so much less of treasure in heaven."

"I can't understand why, Mr. Cushing. You didn't cheat anybody. Speculation is neither robbing nor stealing. The article is in market, and you buy at current quotations. When a rise takes place, you sell. It may happen, and often does, that the price falls, and then you lose. You have adverse as well as favorable chances. The thing is all open to the day"

"Gambling, sir, mere gambling," answered Mr Cushing. "A strife to gain what others may lose; not a system of reciprocal benefits, which is the Christian law of social life. It is founded in an intense and eager selfishness, that will not wait for the slow returns of useful work. It helps nobody; and generally hurts everybody whom it may happen to reach. Money, where it does not come as a gift or benefaction, should always represent a useful equivalent. It is a sign of value. But, when I would possess my neighbor's money without a fair return, then, am I not covetous? Do I not desire his good? Am I not violating a divine commandment? The agriculturist, the manufacturer, the merchant, the artisan, and all who are engaged in productive work or useful employments, serve the common good, and become sharers, by virtue of this service, in the commonwealth; but the speculator, like a tumor in the body, draws in the rich blood, and gives back nothing but fever, unhealthy excitement, disturbance of the useful functions, and pain. That tumor, sir, is no part of the true body of society, and it will be extirpated in the last time. It may grow, as other evil things grow here, but its life is opposite to heavenly life, and it will not be found in heaven."

"You are too serious altogether," Mr. Slocum made answer. "This is an extreme and abstract view—more ethical than practical."

"Than practical! Why, my dear sir! the evil consequences of what I am condemning, all right thinking men see and deplore. The causes lie, as I have intimated, in an intense and eager selfishness, that grasps for gold as the robber grasps for plunder. Neither the speculator nor the robber cares for others; he does not gain by work, production, or benefit of any kind, and take his money as the reward of things useful; but by the law of force or artifice. Is it not so? Think!"

Mr. Slocum was silent.

"There is a last time for us all, my friend," said Mr. Cushing, speaking even more seriously than before; "a last time that is sure to come. You and I have stepped across the line of middle age. I will be fifty in a month; and you have already accomplished the half century. Five, ten, fifteen, twenty years at most, and we shall be missed from our places among men. Have you made your will?"

The question, coming so unexpectedly, gave Mr. Slocum a start.

"Yes, of course," he answered; "I am too systematic to neglect a thing of so much importance. Life is uncertain."

"And in making it," said Mr. Cushing, "you considered well the nature and value of your property, and disposed of it with justice and judgment. As no part of your earthly possessions could be taken into the other life, you provided for their equitable distribution."

"I did."

"As a wise and prudent man. And then, Mr Slocum, did not your thought go beyond to that state of existence which succeeds? To that real world, where we are to abide forever? Did you not think of the 'riches divine,' which are spoken of in God's Holy Word, as possessed by the righteous there? Of the treasure which our Lord enjoins upon us to lay up in heaven? In leaving everything of the world behind us at death, our future becomes a thing of momentous consideration. The wealth of this world is represented by gold and silver—that of the spiritual world into which we rise at death, by goodness and truth. If we do not possess spiritual riches at death, if we have no good in our hearts, nor truth in our minds, we shall be poor, miserable and wretched in the other world.

"These things have pressed themselves on my consideration of late; and your remark about the gain in this fancy stock speculation, being as sure as death, sent them trooping through my mind again. But I have occupied both you and myself too long. Good morning!"

"So you decline this opportunity?" said Mr. Slocum, as his friend moved away.

"I turn from it, and with a shudder at the thought that I was for an instant tempted. No, sir; there is a last time coming, and it may not be afar off. I will not burden my conscience with any transaction that is against the law of heaven, into which I hope to rise when mortal shall put on immortality. Good morning!"

And the two men parted, one to ponder more deeply on the principles of rectitude and the laws of heavenly life by which man must be governed if he would build his house upon a rock; the other to forget warning and suggestion in the selfish love of gain that impelled him to the use of any means not in contravention of human law, by which gold was to be won.

"Have you heard from Mr. Cushing within a day or two?" asked a business friend, addressing Mr. Slocum two or three weeks subsequently.

"No. Why do you ask? Is he sick?"

"Very sick. The last I heard of him, the doctors had but small hope of his recovery."

"You shock me! Mr. Cushing! Can it be possible! What ails him?"

"Some disease of the heart, I understand."

"And not expected to recover?"

"No."

Mr. Slocum's countenance grew serious. His thought recurred to his last interview with Mr. Cushing, and he felt a slight chill running along his nerves. In drawing so near to his friend and acquaintance, death seemed to stand most unpleasantly near to himself.

All day the thoughts of Mr. Slocum kept turning to the sick man, and in the evening he called at his house to make inquiry as to his condition.

"Will you go up and see him?" asked the sad-faced wife of Mr. Cushing.

Mr. Slocum went up to the death-chamber; for, to one of them, that last time had indeed come. A pale, placid face, and clear calm eyes met him. The Angel of Dissolution had placed his signet there, and none could mistake the sign. Mr. Cushing smiled feebly, but sweetly, as he took the hand of his old business friend.

"I am pained to find you so ill," said Mr. Slocum, in a troubled voice.

The smile did not fade from the sick man's lips, as he answered feebly:

"The time has come sooner than I expected; but I am not afraid. I think there is some treasure laid up in heaven. If the amount is not large, it is in good securities, I trust; no 'fancies,' friend Slocum! No speculative stocks. Nothing but what is truly spiritual and substantial—that is, of love to God and the neighbor."

He shut his eyes, the smile still lingering about his mouth. But it began fading slowly; and when it died away, tranquil peace rested calmly where the light had been. He was at rest.

"No 'fancies' in the last time," said Mr. Slocum, communing with his thoughts as he walked, in sober mood, homeward. "Will it be so in my hour of extremity? Will there be no worthless securities in the treasure I have sought to lay up in heaven, when I go, stripped of earthly possessions, into the eternal world? God help me, if my soul were required to-day! I thought him weak and foolish, when he would not go in and win, as I have. I am richer to-day, through the operation, by over five thousand dollars—somebody will be poorer in the same amount before sixty days—but I am glad Cushing held back. He could not have died so peaceably with that burden on his mind. 'Fancies' amid the securities sought to be laid up in Heaven! I never thought of that before. I must look closer to my investments, for what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul."

On the next day, Mr. Slocum sold out all his speculative stocks; and has not, since, sought to gain a single dollar, except through legitimate trade. He cannot forget Mr. Cushing, nor the inevitable last time that comes to all.

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As the sun does not wait for prayers and incantations to be prevailed upon to rise, but immediately shines forth, and is received with universal salutation; so neither do you wait for applauses, and shouts, and praises, in order to do good; but be a voluntary benefactor, and you will be beloved like the sun.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

THE people's representatives do not always go to Congress or the Legislature—they sometimes go into books. And when the time comes they speak; and when the time comes they are heard.

A MAN ought to carry himself in the world as an orange tree would if it could walk up and down in the garden—swinging perfume from every little censer it holds up to the air.

HISTORICAL truth comes to us from the past, as gold is washed down from the mountains of the Sierra Nevada, in minute but precious particles, and intermixed with infinite alloy, the debris of the centuries.

WE should use all the agencies at our command as we use railroad cars—travelling upon one train as far as it will take us in the right direction and then leaving it for another.

THE earth was made and adorned for a life of joy as well as sorrow—it was not hung in eternal darkness and winter: it has sweet returns of day and summer.

MEMORY can glean, but can never renew. It brings us joys faint as is the perfume of the flowers, faded and dried, of the summer that is gone.

LIKE a strong swimmer whose pockets are filled with gold, we sometimes perish from the very excess of our riches.

A PLEASANT jest in time of misfortune is courage to the heart, strength to the arm, and digestion to the stomach.

THERE are a great many subjects to be wise or witty upon—and just as many to be ignorant or foolish about.

THE spirit of innovation is often pestilent. People will not look forward to posterity who never look backward to their ancestors.

HE who can irritate you whenever he likes is your master. You had better turn rebel by learning the virtue of patience.

ONE of the commonest instances of metamorphosis is a toper's turning into a grog-shop—and not much of a metamorphosis either.

IN romance, disguise sometimes conceals grandeur, but in real life it is generally the shelter of disgrace.

BY pulling your finger from the water you leave no hole in the fluid, and by dying you leave no vacancy in the world.

WHEN God had created the world he pronounced it good. The ascetic pietists call it a dead failure.

IN ancient times there were but "three Graces;" in these days every lady thinks she has at least three times that number.

CONFINE not your charities to the good. If you give to the undeserving, you but do to them what heaven has done to you.

PEOPLE may be instructed by those who have less sense than themselves—as a man may be guided by a finger board that has no sense at all.

FOR one who deplores his own follies, you will find a hundred who bitterly deplore those of their neighbors.

PERFECTION to the artist, like the horizon to the voyager, is ever equally afar off.

IF you crack rough jokes at other people's expense, you may get your head cracked at your own.

THE first part of married life is the shine of the honeymoon; the rest too often common moonshine.

A CANTER across a fine field may be a pleasant thing: but we hate a *canter* in the pulpit.

NEVER put off till to-morrow the man you can do to-day.

UNDOUBTEDLY woman is Heaven's *utter-most* work.

NEVER chase a lie: let it alone and it will run itself to death.

MISERABLE men have generally no bowels for others and no mercy on their own.

A GREAT mistake sometimes turns out better than a good intention.

HEAVEN deals with us on no representative system. Souls are not saved in bundles.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A NUMBER of children—the eldest of whom was but seven years old—were playing in the back yard of the parents of one of them, in Brooklyn, one morning a short time since, and a strange cat coming into the yard, they all gave chase and attempted to drive the intruder out, but the cat sprang upon one of the boys and lacerated his face so seriously, that the little fellow screamed with pain, and all his playmates fled, leaving him to be rescued by the servant-girl.

A COUPLE of boys, respectively six and nine years of age, were playing marbles together in the street, and near the corner of First Avenue, a few days since, and getting into a quarrel, the elder gave the younger a push, and precipitated him under the feet of a cart horse that was just passing, and the horse stepping on, and the cart wheels passing over the body of the poor little fellow he was so badly injured it was feared he could not recover.

A COUPLE of river thieves, while robbing a schooner, that lay at a wharf on the East river, one night recently, were detected by a company of sailors who were returning from a "spree," and at once attacked by the jolly tars; but the rascals drew their knives, and after wounding four of the sailors severely, made their escape.

AN old offender named Kainac, who once played the part of an eleemosynary Polish refugee in this and neighboring cities, tumbled down the area of a house into which it is supposed he was attempting to make a burglarious entrance, one night recently, and was injured so severely that he died the next day.

A YOUNG lady in Boston, who, a short time since, consented to gratify her lover, who was in the last stage of consumption, with a marriage on his death-bed, having arrayed herself in her bridal robes, went to the room of the invalid, but was too late for the ceremony, as her betrothed was already dead.

A LABORING man, who was attending the body of a deceased friend to the grave, one day, recently, fell from the front seat of the vehicle in which he was riding, and was so hurt by the fall and the passing over him of the wheels of the wagon, that he died in a short time.

A BURGLAR not long since attempted to break into a house in Reistertown, Md., while the family were still up and cognizant of his intention; the master of the house even warned him off twice, but the determined villain persisted in his burglarious undertaking, and was finally shot dead.

A RESPECTABLY dressed young man, whose gait was unsteady from intoxication, in attempting to leap upon a Brooklyn ferryboat that had left the wharf, one evening recently, came short and fell into the slip, from which he was rescued with much difficulty.

A SUPERSTITIOUS man living in Cincinnati, who believed in spiritualism, astrology fortune-telling and other humbugs, was lately so frightened by a fortune-teller, who predicted that all manner of ills would befall him, that he took a pistol and blew his brains out.

A MAN who died recently in Baltimore, confessed, on his death-bed, that he committed a murder for which another man, named John Stephens, who was entirely innocent of the crime, was hanged in that city some two years ago.

A BOY thirteen years of age, named McDermott, while riding on the cow-catcher of a locomotive, near the Bergen tunnel, in New Jersey, either fell off or attempted to jump off, and was crushed to a mangled mass by the engine, which passed over him.

A YOUNG Cuban gentleman, who recently went on board the steamer Cahawba to bid a couple of friends and countrymen good-bye, in stepping one side to let a lady pass, fell down the hatchway to the bottom of the hold, and was fatally injured.

A SERVANT girl in the employ of a lady living in Kingston, (Canada,) recently took occasion, while the family were attending church in the evening, to steal about $600 in cash and set the house on fire.

A HOMELESS man crawled into a limekiln in Williamsburgh to sleep, a few nights since, and was suffocated by the gas and smoke.

A WOMAN living at Chatham, C. W., who was addicted to intoxication, fell into the fire one evening while she was drunk, and was burned to a cinder.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1861.

THE CAUSE OF THE ENORMOUS AND UNPARALLELED CIRCULATION OF THE LEDGER.—We pay more money for contributions by popular and eminent writers, in order to make a great and good paper, than is paid by any ten other literary papers in the country; and, as a legitimate result, our circulation is larger than the combined circulation of any ten others.

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BIG MEN AND SMALL MEN.

Men of moderate dimensions, take heart. Don't be cast down in the presence of the big-boned *altitudinarians.* The longitude and latitude of a man are not the measure of his strength. That pocket Hercules, Dr. Winship, can lift more than the biggest of us. To be sure, weight goes for something in a bout at fisticuffs or a cavalry charge, but even in the prize ring the giants are not unfrequently worsted, and it is by light infantry, not heavy dragoons, that modern battles are won. The wiry French Zouaves played the mischief with the burly Germans at Magenta and Solferino, and the spare Italians, under Garibaldi, thrashed their oppressors when the odds were two to one against them.

The truth is, that small men are generally better made than your Goliahs. They are tougher, more compact, more symmetrical. Nature does not seem to take as much pains in perfecting large animals as in fashioning small ones. Compare the flea with the elephant. The insect is a microscopic athlete. We all know at what a rate it can travel on its muscle. If the proportion of strength to size were the same in the enormous beast as in the little domestic acrobat, the former would be able to take the City Hall at a flying leap, with the Common Council and all their sins on its back.

With the human animal much depends on training. There must, of course, be a fair amount of muscle and sinew to train. It would have been impossible to make a gymnast of Calvin Edson. But any young man of ordinary natural strength may double or triple it by proper exercise, besides improving his health and increasing his chances of longevity. To attain these ends, however, he must not only take the positive and active measures necessary to their accomplishment, but he must forswear everything likely to retard that object. In a word, he must not dissipate.

What a race of athletes we should have in this country if these simple, common sense rules of physical education and hygeine were carried out. The third generation from the present would, under such a system, be at least twice as vigorous as their grandfathers, and hale men of three score years and ten, and even four score years, would not be considered marvels.

The average duration of human life is not up to the true standard in any part of the world, (except, perhaps, among the Araucanian Indians of Chili,) and in this country it is certainly far below it. Low as it is with us, however, it is high enough to show that the constitutions of the people are naturally good. Considering the pains that thousands of Americans take to kill themselves, it is wonderful that they live as long as they do.

WHITE LIES.

Some slip-shod moralists insist that it is permissable, and indeed commendable, to tell fibs in cases where the utterance of the plain truth might give offence or pain. That this doctrine is practically carried out in society we all know. Persons who wish to avoid receiving unwelcome visitors without resorting to a positive rebuff, direct their servants to say they are "not at home." "I am glad to see you" is the greeting with which a man of polished manners meets the bore whose appearance he regards with horror. Rejoicing heirs express "the deepest regret" at the decease of rich old curmudgeons, for whose speedy translation to a better world they have long devoutly prayed. Invalids past hope of recovery are informed by smiling friends that they are looking better every day. Rash men of business are congratulated on their brilliant prospects by those who know they are on the verge of ruin. In fact, never to utter disagreeable truths, and to deal liberally in agreeable falsehoods, seem to be the accomplishments—negative and positive—most indispensable to individuals who desire to be "perfectly at home in polite society."

To such courteous hypocrisy we cannot subscribe. It may sometimes be inexpedient to tell the truth, but never necessary or proper to invent falsehoods for courtesy's sake. Infinite harm is done by what Mrs. Opie has designated as "White Lies." In nine cases out of ten the plain truth, kindly spoken, is beneficial to those who seek counsel, advice, or any kind of information or aid. In no case is falsehood, however well intended, really justifiable. When it is deemed unwise to speak the truth, say nothing.

MAN VS. BRUTE.

The fact that some human beings bear a dim resemblance to certain quadrupeds, birds, and fishes, is beyond question. Who has not seen prim women with a cattish expression of countenance, sharp rascals with hawk-like visages, strutting fops with the air and gait of the pouter pigeon, and great, heavy lumpish fellows, who looked remarkably like codfish about the head and shoulders. Clever caricaturists have taken advantage of such fanciful resemblance, between man and the lower animals, in many humorous drawings and engravings, where the menagerie and the aviary furnish the heads of the groups and comic humanity the other belongings. This species of adaptation is as old as painting itself, and was practised in Egypt three thousand years ago, though generally with a more serious object than at the present day. We think, however, that many of the old mythic pictures of this kind were intended to be funny; and that some of the artists, who depicted allegories in the days of the Pharaohs, had a spice of the *vis comica* about them. And why should not comparative physiognomy show us a resemblance between certain people and certain members of the brute creation, when we know full well that there is a resemblance between their propensities. Are not some men in their natures foxy, wolfish, snakish, shark-like, monkey-like, leonine, &c., &c.; and are there not women dove-like, parrot-like, doe-like, &c., in disposition and bearing. Comparitive physiognomy, as applied to humanity and the brutes, is a very pretty study. The analogies are wonderful, and by no means complimentary to the race of Adam.

THE RAVAGES OF INDOLENCE.

Indolence promises without redeeming the pledge; a mist of forgetfulness rises up in the mind of the idler and obscures the memory of vows and oaths. The negligence of laziness breeds more falsehoods than the cunning of the sharper. As poverty waits upon the steps of Indolence, so, upon such poverty, brood equivocations, subterfuges, lying denials. Falsehood becomes the instrument of every plan. Negligence of truth, next occasional falsehood, then wanton mendacity,—these three strides traverse the whole road of lies. Indolence as surely runs to dishonesty, as to lying. Indeed, they are but different parts of the same road, and not far apart. In directing the conduct of the Ephesian converts, Paul says, *Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good.* The men who were thieves, were those who had ceased to work. Industry was the road back to honesty. When stores are broken open, the idle are first suspected. The desperate forgeries and swindlings of past years have taught men, upon their occurrence, to ferret their authors among the unemployed, or among those vainly occupied in vicious pleasures.

The terrible passion for stealing rarely grows upon the young, except through the necessities of their idle pleasures. Business is first neglected for amusement, and amusement soon becomes the only business. The appetite for vicious pleasure outruns the means of procuring it. The theatre, the circus, the card-table, the midnight carouse, demand money. When scanty earnings are gone, the young man pilfers from the till. First, because he hopes to repay, and next, because he despairs of paying—for the disgrace of stealing ten dollars or a thousand will be the same, but not their respective pleasures. Next, he will gamble, since it is only another form of stealing. Gradually excluded from reputable society, the vagrant takes all the badges of vice, and is familiar with her paths; and, through them, enters the broad road of crime. Society precipitates its lazy members, as water does its filth; and they form at the bottom, a pestilent sediment, stirred up by every breeze of evil, into riots, robberies and murders. Into it drains all the filth, and out of it, as from a morass, flow all the streams of pollution. Brutal wretches, desperately haunted by the law, crawling in human filth, brood here their villain schemes, and plot mischief to man. Hither resorts the truculent demagogue, to stir up the fœtid filth against his adversaries, or to bring up mobs out of this sea, which cannot rest, but continually casts up mire and dirt.

ACCIDENTS THAT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED.

The street casualties which occur in a crowded city are so few, as compared with the perils by which its thoroughfares are beset, that their rarity can only be accounted for by supposing that a benign Providence interposes its protecting shield between the wayfarers and the dangers that environ them. For instance, not a day passes unmarked by escapes which may well be called "hair-breadth," in "tumultuous Broadway." One of these hazardous affairs was witnessed a few days ago by a large number of persons. A young lady was crossing Broadway near Canal street, when a stage, driven at reckless speed, caught her midway on her passage, and it seemed that she must be crushed to death; but at the very moment when the near horse was about to trample her under his feet, she made a spring, and clasping him around the neck, was in this way carried for several yards. When the vehicle was stopped, she let go her hold and sank almost fainting, but unhurt, into the arms of the people who had run to the rescue. Escapes equally narrow, if not equally exciting, are common in our streets; and it is far more wonderful that tens of thousands daily make their way unharmed through the counter currents of hoofs and wheels in our great thoroughfare, than it would be if fifteen or twenty people, crippled amid these countless perils, should be taken to the hospitals every twenty-four hours. If the issues of life and death were not in wiser hands than our own, or than those of the civil authorities, the accidents that happen would be in a much larger ratio to the accidents that *might have happened*, than is the case at present.

THE FIBS OF VANITY.

Mr. Winkle assured Mr. Pickwick that he could skate and shoot, although he had never had skates on his feet or a fowling-piece at his shoulder. He was put to the test, and the results were a disgraceful flounder on the ice and the winging of his friend instead of a rook. The world abounds with Winkles. One meets them everywhere—fellows who are willing to risk failure rather than acknowledge their shortcomings. "Mr. Winkle," said Mr. Pickwick, "you're a humbug, sir;" and he might have added—a humbug of the most contemptible order.

People who boast of acquirements or qualities they do not possess, are sure to be detected and exposed sooner or later. A blockhead, whose moral sense is sound, despite the weakness of his intellect, may pass through life in honorable obscurity. A coward who makes no pretensions to valor, may escape utter contempt. An illiterate man, who listens with deference to his superiors in knowledge, and lays their lessons to heart, may inspire respect. But blockheads, poltroons, and ignoramuses, who make their deficiencies conspicuous by vaporing and boasting, are universally looked upon by those who love truth and contemn falsehood, as particularly despicable.

In a late LEDGER you express the opinion that "clerks should not ask a lady, when entering a store, whether she wishes to purchase any article, and that after purchasing an article, the clerk should not ask if she wishes to look at or examine others."

I differ from your judgment. In a country like ours, the credit system prevails almost entirely, and if, on entering a store, a lady is not politely asked if she will examine goods, and invited to purchase, she understands it as a polite notification that her husband's patronage is not very desirable. And a prudent, sensible lady, if permitted to enter a store and remain without being invited to purchase, will retire without buying, or offering to do so.

TEXAS.

Our correspondent is mistaken. The "credit system" does *not* prevail in our principal cities, in reference to "shopping" purchases. In places, however, where that custom does prevail, it may be well enough for clerks to follow the course indicated by "Texas;" but in cities like New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Orleans, &c., where a lady purchaser is not known to a salesman, cash is almost invariably tendered in payment of goods.

TWO IMPOSSIBILITIES.

If there is a thing which a man cannot do, it is to write a lucid description of a lady's dress. The sex of any book, or magazine, or newspaper article, may be instantaneously determined, when this delicate subject is ventured upon. After a man has "shot a gold arrow" through a woman's hair, or stuck the inevitable stereotyped "simple rose" in it, or mentioned that "her lace was point," her jewelry "the simple diamond"—(!)—her dress of "evident richness," or, "very tasty"—he couldn't possibly say *tasteful*—or, that her bouquet was "chaste," his occupation is gone—and it is really touching to see the bewildered creature's embarrassment! One thinks of an elephant trying to thread a cambric needle. Sometimes, in despair, when a male writer *must* face this question in his writings, he pockets the "dignity" so precious to his sex, sufficiently to request advance instruction from some female friend. Perhaps I should say female *fiend*, in consideration of the bogus information she mischievously imparts to her credulous listener, to be embodied like the fly in a pot of ointment, amid his wisdom. Good enough for him; let him swallow one of his own pills of "advice to women," and confine himself to what is within reach of his comprehension, and "never attempt things for which nature has evidently not designed him!" As an offset to this, and because I believe fair play is a jewel, I would remark, that women are quite as awkward when they attempt pen-and-ink-ually to make male characters converse. It is invariably feminine prattle, the masculine element evaporating in the "by Joves," and "my dear fellow's." How should it be else? when only once in a century, a woman may be so peculiarly situated in her relations to some prominent person, that she may be thrown almost exclusively into gentlemen's society, and unobserved by them, owing to her insignificance, or want of beauty, may hear and successfully reproduce it. How can she else—even form an idea how men talk together—when the most sensible among them, at sight of a petticoat, considers it necessary to talk nonsense, and the most sincere pay us the poor compliment to say everything that they do *not* mean?

FANNY FERN.

A DILEMMA.

How is one to distinguish in this crowded city, where pain and penury are so successfully simulated by street applicants for charity, how is one to distinguish between the sham and the real? What remorse like that of having turned a deaf ear, in our plenty, to the last *innocent* petition of a starving, houseless fellow creature? And yet they who are oftenest called upon, owing to their prominent position, to answer the promiscuous calls for charity, tell us of impositions so gross and unblushing, that one may well make, in all good faith, some such deplorable mistake on the side of caution. It remains a fact, however, that the most needy and deserving cases are they, of which we seldom or never hear. Loud-mouthed blessings, ever ready to turn to curses, on the lips of imposture if *money* is not forthcoming, has chilled many a benevolent impulse, if not wholly extinguished it. That person who would furnish the public a crucible in which to try all charitable applications, would confer a lasting obligation on the perplexed.

FANNY FERN.

THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE.

When you are world-weary, and soul-sick, *talk with a little child.* As the clear, trusting eye is lifted to yours, a thought of the immeasurable distance you have blindly travelled from that sweet *trust* to your present atheism, will touch the world-frozen fountain of your tears; and just as the little head, unquestioning and confiding, leans upon *your* breast, so will you yearn instinctively for the All Father, whose loving arms are our best and safest shelter. That man, or woman, must indeed be past redemption, whom "the little one in the midst" cannot bring nearer Heaven.

FANNY FERN.

BATON ROUGE, LA., *Feb.* 19*th*, 1861.

MR. BONNER—*Dear Sir*:—In the LEDGER of the 9th February, under the head of "Byron's Unwritten Poem," you say: "It is not generally known that Lord Byron, a few years before his death, sketched the outlines of a dramatic poem, the plan of which would have afforded a wider scope for his erratic genius than that of any of his completed works," etc. After which you proceed to give the "*project* of the poem." What we wish to call your attention to is this: You have doubtless perused the works of that singular and powerful genius, Edgar A. Poe. If you have ever perused his "William Wilson," you could not but have observed the striking similarity between that production and the unwritten poem of Byron, as the plan thereof was sketched by you.

The plan of "William Wilson" and that of "Byron's unwritten poem," as sketched by you in the LEDGER, are precisely the same.

Query. Is either Byron or Poe guilty of plagiarism, or is the similarity of the productions to be attributed to a wonderful coincidence of thought?

Your correspondent believes one or the other of these conclusions to be inevitable. By answering this query in the next number of the LEDGER, you will oblige your humble servant,

X. Y. Z.

We do not know the date of the poem of Edgar A. Poe to which our correspondent refers, but the date of Washington Irving's statement, upon which our article was founded, was August, 1835. Mr. Irving said, however, that the plot of the projected poem of Lord Byron had been communicated to him by Captain Medwin several years before, the latter having received a sketch of it from Byron at a still more remote period. Moreover, the plots of "William Wilson" and of Byron's embryo production are not identical, though similar. Both were probably derived from a Spanish play called the *Embozado*, (meaning a person muffled and disguised,) to which they bear a family likeness. It is at least certain that this play was the source of Byron's inspiration, for he expressly said so.

THE BOTTLE QUESTION.

MR. LEDGER:—Allow me to hint that your correspondents have jumped to a wrong conclusion in regard to an "Old Sea Captain's" question as to why a corked and sealed bottle, containing nothing but air, on being lowered into the sea to the depth of twelve hundred feet, comes up *full* of water, with the cork inverted. Now, sir, if the cork was forced up the neck of the bottle by the expansion of air, there must be air in the bottle, which is not the case, the bottle being full of water, which entirely displaced the air when it forced in the cork. But thus it is: the cork being compressible, is, by the very great pressure of the water at that depth, considerably compressed, and by its buoyancy rises up into the neck of the bottle after the air has rushed out. The inversion of the cork is caused by the superior weight of the wax; then, as the bottle is raised, the cork expands and tightens in the neck, until there is no more room for expansion in that direction; but still, as the bottle rises nearer to the surface, the cork will expand a little more, *lengthwise*, and force itself further up into the nose of the bottle by its own expansion.

Yours, &c., &c., JAMES WARREN,
Monroe, Iowa.

—It is reported that Mr. Henry C. Bowen, the silk merchant, in a recent attempt to adjust his affairs with his creditors, proposed that they should take the *Independent* newspaper, of which he is proprietor, at a valuation of *three hundred thousand dollars!* We have not always approved of Mr. Bowen's mode of conducting his paper, but we never had the disposition to say anything so unkind of him as this. Must not the report have been circulated by some violent rival like the editor of the *Evangelist?*

THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.—No. 85.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

Will not somebody compile a chapter of Railway Ethics? The car is an entirely new development of society. The proprieties of the household, upon ordinary occasions and upon extraordinary; of public assemblies, of balls, concerts, levees, &c., are tolerably well settled. We suppose ship etiquette and steamboat etiquette are well understood. The old-fashioned stage, and that most-to-be-lamented institution of tranquillity—the CANAL-BOAT—had their proprieties and conventions.

Let me stop a moment, and call to remembrance that passing glory—packet-travelling on a canal! Was there ever before, will there ever be again, such a personification of utter *peace* in travel?

No rocking and jouncing as in the stage coach—no grinding and jarring—no bouncing and churning as in the rail-car—no shaking of ponderous machinery, as in steamboats, and smell of grease, or rolling and lurching in a high sea. The canal-boat glided in perfect peace. You could read, write, talk, sleep, as if in a dwelling. To be sure, speed was lacking; therefore, only when you had leisure should you resort to it. How well do we remember the sweet days spent in 1837, in crossing the mountains by canal, the Juniata valley, and a world of hills, stream-edges, valleys,—along which a happy party glided as in a dream. Of all the half-score, but two, we believe, yet live! Among the things to be mourned over, by their growing old, is that they cannot *run* as nimbly as they did thirty years ago; that they cannot find any apples equal to those which grew on the homestead, nor any gingerbread like that which boyhood munched; nor such utter faith in men, and belief in anything that is told you, and that we must not swing again on the great barnyard gate, with its long sweep, nor ride any more horses to water, nor ride in a canal boat! Indeed, we are becoming quite melancholy, and must stop! But for *cars* there seems to be no settled ethics. In the parlor, a gentleman rises to give a lady a seat. In the cars and in church, not. In the parlor, a lady would never think of walking up to a gentleman, and demanding a seat, but in the cars, without asking, she takes it, and if the poor occupant happens to be in, she asks him out very much as a man-of-war sends a shot across the bows of a ship that won't come to.

"Is this seat engaged?" said we to a gentleman. "Yes, sir." We suspected a fib at the time. Approaching another, "Is this seat engaged?" "Yes, sir, it is." Very well. We seated ourselves opposite to watch. And as the cars moved on, and no one entered the engaged seats, we mused upon the folly of these men who would lie for so small a thing, in a manner so transparent. It is always thus, said we. Men are not deceived. No one is so much deceived by a falsehood as the one who tells it. If these gentlemen knew how transparent their petty lie is, and how they appear, methinks—— But, just then a gentleman came forward to the vacant seat, pulled from the corner of the seat his travelling cap, and the two companions fell to a very sociable chat; and so, it seems, the gentleman was right, I was wrong, and all my moralizing was like an arrrow shot at random into the air. Well, if the gentleman *had* told a fib, these thoughts would have suited his case! On looking round, the other seat, too, was occupied! Was it possible that I had been a little testy, and had fallen into an uncharitableness quite as bad as the sin of fibbing?

But, as we are good-natured *now*, we will be *just*; for in this world *justice*, in judging the motives and conduct of our fellow-men depends, very much upon our *moods*. We are disposed to be just when we are pleased, and unjust when morose and irritable. After not a little travelling, in every kind of conveyance, our impressions are distinctly that there is a very general disposition to be polite. It is the rule, and impoliteness the exception. And, although, now and then, it has been our fate to meet imperious and exacting women, who demanded much and thanked little, they are but as one in a hundred. On the contrary, the good breeding and courtesy of ladies in travel, under annoyances, and their exceeding good sense, has strongly impressed itself upon us.

We have noticed, too, that where for a moment, at first, there seemed to be selfishness, the moment ladies had time to grow to their surroundings, they seemed to relax their first disposition, and to grow more and more disposed to show kindnesses to all around them. But it is certainly true, that *two* seats are sometimes occupied by one person, while others suffer; yea, three seats; and in one case, we saw a lady appropriating four seats, while some stood up. But the cases are rare. And, on the whole, as we are now entirely good-natured, we conclude that railroad ethics are about as well settled, in so far as *passengers* are concerned, as we can expect.

TRANSFERRING BONES FROM DEAD BODIES TO LIVING BODIES.

William Cobbett transplanted the bones of Tom Paine from this country to England, and was thenceforth called "the old bone grubber," by his vindictive enemy, the London Times. The bones of notabilities have also been transplanted at divers times to divers places. In fact, so much of this sort of work was done in the dark ages, that when the light came, it was difficult to identify many of the osseous deposits, nor has the uncertainty in relation to some of them ever been cleared up. But a transplantation of bones is said to have recently taken place in Paris which throws all other exploits in that line completely into the shade. A certain Dr. Ollier claims to have transferred bones from dead bodies to living bodies—to supply deficiencies in the latter—with entire success. He states in a late number of the *Journal de la Physiologie* that he has taken bones from a dead animal, an hour and a quarter after death, and succeeded in making them regain their vitality, so that five months after the process they formed a living portion of the osseous system to which they had been transferred. This is important—if true. Will not some one of our crack operators try the experiment? *Matrimonially* speaking, we know that if a man loses his "rib," the loss may be, and often is supplied by the "rib" of a deceased person—but can that thing be done *surgically?*

BOSTON, *March* 7*th*, 1861.

ROBERT BONNER, ESQ.—*Dear Sir*:—Your remarks on Steam Navigation, and the provision made for the safety of life, are too true; in fact, there is not a steamship on the line between New York and San Francisco that has boats fit for use; they hang at their *davits*, voyage after voyage, without examination; their seams are open from constant exposure to the sun, with the exception of Francis's life-boats, of which each vessel may have one or two. Even if they were all seaworthy, there would not be enough to save one-third of the passengers they carry. In May, 1856, I was a passenger on board the Illinois, from Aspinwall to New York, with nearly nine hundred souls on board. A fire was discovered around the smoke stack, but fortunately in time to put it out. It was blowing hard at the time. It was my firm belief that there were not three boats fit for use, nor any spars by which rafts could be made. * * * * I made a trip on one of your Staten Island boats last summer; there must have been near a thousand persons on board, and there was one small boat, and the *plug* out of the bottom.

AN OLD SHIP MASTER.

PIOUS SCANDAL.

BY A CLERGYMAN'S DAUGHTER.

The meanest scandal in the world is that which under the cloak of piety seeks to hide its deep malignity. The "religion" of many people consists in their wonderful perception of the sins of others, and the earnestness with which they make such sins public. Their own home may be a hell of contention; they may carry within them a volcano of ungoverned passion, yet secure in "a hope" which they obtained a dozen years ago, they fancy that they have nothing to do but to amuse themselves peering into the loop holes in other people's souls—and then entertain their neighbors by telling what they see.

Sometimes these are well meaning but very narrow people, who, thinking that their own standard of excellence is the only one worth attaining, deem it their duty to quarrel with every one who thinks differently.

Mr. Goodenough meets Mrs. Sharp:

"Sister Sharp, our church is in a terrible state—such coldness, such coldness!

"But while we retain our present minister it will always remain cold. I have no faith that his labors will be blessed. He is too speculative; he is too abstract; he does not dwell as he ought on the story of the cross. He doesn't make the atonement the one thing needful and all sufficient. Besides, he is too worldly. He doesn't pay sufficient attention to the poor. He don't study enough; he don't write enough; he don't visit enough. He lacks the most necessary qualifications of a minister of the gospel. Of course his sermons don't *feed me*;" and Mr. Goodenough groans aloud.

"I pity Mr. Trywell," whines Sister Sharp. Poor man! he would do well enough if it wasn't for his wife. Why Brother Goodenough she kills his influence. Isn't she vanity itself; another new silk dress last Sunday, be-flounced and be-furbelowed. I wish we could bring back to life the minister's wife of thirty years ago. Dear old Mrs. Proser! I loved her when a child. She always wove her own carpets, and never had but two breadths in the skirt of her frock. O, if we had *such* a minister's wife now, Brother Goodenough, we should have a revival."

Then come discussions of the different church members, and Mr. Goodenough and Mrs. Sharp separate, meekly believing that all the piety in the church goes with them. If Mr. Trywell is not dismissed in less than six months, it will not be because these worthies will not labor zealously to bring about such a result.

Mrs. Tattle calls on Mrs. Fribble.

"Mrs. Fribble, have you heard the news?"

"No, indeed, what is it?"

"Well, they say that Mrs. Inkbottle is jealous of her husband—jealous as she can be."

"Do tell!" exclaims Mrs. Fribble; "I thought that they were the most loving couple in the world—a model pair."

"O, you can never judge by appearances, Mrs. Fribble. But that isn't the worst I have to tell. For the sake of the cause I'm sorry to know it's true; but they say, and I'm sorry I've got such a good reason for thinking it true; they say that Miss Saintly is the cause of it!"

"O, Mrs. Tattle, if the story gets out what a disgrace it will bring upon religion."

"Well, it *will* get out; there's no helping *that*, Mrs. Fribble. I'll do my part to keep it still, but one can't do everything. It's awful to have such stories circulated about church members, and it's worse to have 'em true; and I've reason enough to think it true, for I saw Miss Saintly look at Mr. Inkbottle, across the church, with my own eyes. You know there can be a great deal in a look. I made up my mind then, and mind you, I hadn't heard a word; I made up my mind then, that Miss Saintly wasn't so saintly after all. The huzzy, and she making such professions. As you say, Mrs. Fribble, it's the disgrace such facts bring on religion which is the worst. We ought to be thankful that we've no disposition to do such things. I am sure I am. At our next female prayer meeting, I think it will be our duty to make them the special subjects of prayer. We needn't mention names you know, and if the sisters ask us who we mean, we can look mysterious, but needn't tell."

These pious women, fully assured of their duty, are zealous in doing it until a respectable couple, and an innocent girl, are victimized by every gossiping tongue in the town.

THE LOST CHILD.

A WESTERN MOTHER'S STORY.

'Twas in the Indian Summer time,
When nuts and acorns lay
Among the leaves of red and gold,
My little lamb, just seven years old,
Went in the woods astray.
Like cloud-caught sunshine was her hair,
Her eyes of holiest blue,
Her lips, in motion or repose,
Seemed leaflets of the prairie rose,
And breathed its fragrance, too.
Our settlement was close begirt
With solemn woods—a space
Hewn from the shadows round about,
Where the glad daylight they shut out,
Kissed Earth's uncovered face.
Into that 'leaguering wilderness
My shining fairy strayed,
Even as a sunbeam turned aside
From kindred beams, alone might glide
Into the depths of shade.
Three days we searched the forest dim
On the old frontier plan,
And I, the mother, wild and lorn,
With blistered feet and garments torn,
Outstrode the strongest man.
Three dreadful days the cruel woods
Vouchsafed no hopeful sign;
Oh! mothers of the far, wild West—
Ye, the despair that wrung my breast,
Ye only can divine.
I raved, they say, of savage beasts,
Of reptiles, famine, thirst,
And sometimes kneeling on the sod,
With streaming eyes implored of God
The child my bosom nursed.
On the fourth day He answered me—
Beside a bubbling spring
Whereto some little footprints led,
Stirless my darling lay—not dead,
Not dead, but slumbering.
In all her wanderings it seems
The child had known no fear;
Angels were with her in the waste,
And as her arms my neck embraced,
I felt them hovering near!
She told me how on nuts and grapes
And berries red she fared,
And how the merry birds had sung
And fluttered round her all day long,
And how she slept unscared.
She saw a panther in the brake
Crouch with erected hair,
"But, mother, I knelt down," she said,
"And prayed, and when I raised my head
The creature was not there."
I know the Friend of children—He
Who bade them come to Him,
Heard, as she knelt, my darling's prayer,
And gave her to His angels' care,
There in the forest dim!

SONG: NOT TO YON SKIES I LOOK FOR THEE.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

Not to yon skies I look for thee;
Too cold. though sparkling, and afar
From where my earthly hours are passed,
Is hung the nearest star:
Nor can I let wild Fancy, winged
By love in quest of thee to roam,
Make in some heavenlier paradise
Thy blest, but shadowy home.

II.

Ah, no! the skies shall have thee not
Nor Eden, even brighter yet
Than all those glorious, starry isles
In Heaven's blue Ocean set:
Thy spirit's dwelling is my *heart*,
And there at Love's own tender calls
I feel thee pacing to and fro
Amid its sounding halls.

III.

They sound unto thy shining feet,
Shining, for thou art of the Blest;
And often, as of old, I feel
Thy white brow on my breast;
And on my yearning lips thy own;
And in my ear thy voice that sings,
"*Look not to stars; my soul for thine*
Still waits with folded wings!"

THE HARLOW ESTATE.

ITS HEIRS---REAL AND PRETENDED.

A TALE OF CITY LIFE.

BY P. HAMILTON MYERS,

AUTHOR OF "PAUL MORTON," "PRISONER OF THE BORDER," "BELL BRANDON," "THE VAN VELDENS," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

The years over which our narrative has leaped had wrought some changes in the fortunes of Herbert Harlow and his benefactors.

Miss Weldover had married a far-western man, and had moved off into one of the once Mexican territories; and the good doctor, rendered lonely by her departure, had yielded to the fascinations of a gay widow, who had set gins and pitfalls for him on every side, and he had entered a second time into the married state. He believed that he did this, in a great degree, for Herbert's benefit, who had lost a mother in the excellent Jerusha, and who, he thought, would find another equally amiable in Mrs. Florinda Sellum, relict of the late Captain (of something) Sellum.

The widow was so very fond of children, and doted so particularly upon Herbert, before marriage: he was such an angel in her eyes; his very faults were so becoming that they only showed him off in another phase of beauty; and, in short, such was her admiration of the little cherub, that the simple-hearted doctor had no other solicitude in regard to the new relation he was assuming, excepting that the kind Florinda would spoil the child.

She did not. But she certainly spoiled the doctor, who, sad to say, found Mrs. Weldover to be an entirely different woman from Mrs. Capt. Sellum, and who at the end of six short weeks already looked regretfully back at the liberty he had thrown away.

When as many months had passed matters were far worse. The new wife did not see the sense of bringing up other people's children: men did not know anything about the trouble made by boys around a house; and for her part she thought the doctor had done quite enough for Herbert, and ought to put him out to learn a trade, so that he would be able to take care of himself.

So she talked, and her husband, who had already allowed the reins of family government to slip from his hands, soon began to feel that Herbert was but "a tenant at sufferance" of his recent happy home.

The child who had so long enjoyed the freedom which unlimited affection gives, was now restricted from most of his accustomed pleasures—was snubbed on all occasions, and found only a stealthy solace and protection on the part of his late generous guardian.

Matters could not long remain in this state. Neither the doctor nor his *protégé* had any rest; and the persecuted man began to reflect whether it was not best for the lad's own happiness to place him out of the jurisdiction of the once gentle Florinda.

When he at last resolved upon this, the question how to dispose of him was the next in order.

"A trade, *of course!*" said the late Mrs. Capt. Sellum, with some such emphasis as her dear departed might have given to the word of command, at the head of his "rangers," or his canal boat, for what that captaincy had been no one seemed to know.

"A trade?"

"Yes: a tailor I should say; he is always sitting cross-legged; and, besides, he can then be his own goose."

The doctor smiled, and so did Herbert, faintly.

"I fear he would not quite like to be a tailor."

"Oh, *like?* perhaps not. He might not like to do anything, but live on other people. That isn't the question; but what is he good for, and what is good for him!"

"Not that, my dear."

"Well, then—a shoemaker, a carpenter, a hatter; they are all respectable callings, and folks grow rich in following them. I don't care what, so that the child is out of——that is to say is in business, and is learning something."

"He is very young yet."

"Oh, dreadful young! I wonder if he can walk! We'll have to get a cradle for him, I guess!"

"But—I really do not think any one would take him to learn a trade at his age."

"Let them take him, then, as a shop boy, or an errand boy, until he is old enough. He will be learning."

"But, my dear, you do not consider how very young he is."

"Nonsense! I see lots of boys in shops and stores, as small as he. He can, at least, open and shut doors. Young, indeed! Some folks, I believe, are so old, that everybody looks young to them."

There was yet some fire in the smoldering ashes of Dr. Weldover's manhood, and it flashed up now.

"Herbert shall not be put to a trade, nor in a shop," he said; "but since he is so displeasing to you, I will send him to a boarding-school."

"A boarding-school! Why, that would be twice as expensive as keeping him at home! I don't think you have so much money, that you can afford to throw it away in that style."

"No matter. what I have is my own, and Herbert shall go to boarding-school."

The doctor trembled with the exertion necessary to assert this right, and nothing but his strong affection for his adopted son could have made him take so bold a position. One by one he had yielded all his own rights and comforts, and here he had made his first bold stand against conjugal encroachments.

A scene ensued.

Reproaches went off like rockets, and taunts and jeers fell like howitzer shells around the stunned doctor's head. But he carried his point, and carried his boy the next day to school.

The institution which he had selected for this purpose was located about midway between his residence and the city, on the route which he daily travelled, and it would afford him the opportunity of frequently seeing the child, and of still more often gratifying his eyes with a passing view of the walls which contained him.

It was something, the good man thought, to have him so near, where he could keep watch over him, and where he could personally attend him, if he should be sick. He soon became reconciled to the change, and he was convinced that it was quite the best place for the boy.

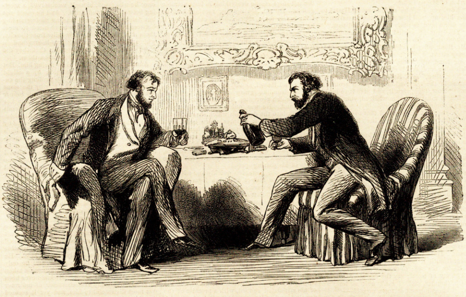
But Mrs. Weldover made him pay dearly for his triumph. Not in one way, but in twenty. Not for a few days or weeks, but for months and—no, not for years.

At the end of the first twelve months, the doctor's health, which had long been delicate, gave many signs of failure. Signs to others, but not to him. He saw but slight ailings in what, had they occurred in a patient, he would have regarded as the crumbling of the very foundations of the constitution. But trifling as was his illness, it reminded him of something he had long purposed and long procrastinated.

This was the making of his will. He had not been anxious on this point before marriage, because then his sister would have inherited his little property, and she understood what share he designed for Herbert, and would have executed his unwritten will just as faithfully as if it were recorded on parchment and attested, and sealed, and proved, by all the intricate forms which legal ingenuity has built up as a witness to, and a barrier against man's dishonesty.

It was a different case now. He could not trust his wife to protect his adopted son; he did not even dare to tell her how considerable a share of his small estate he designed to bestow upon him.

The law would give Herbert nothing, and he resolved to get the start of the law.



A PAIR OF VILLAINS.

He thought it all over one evening, while solitarily smoking his pipe in the kitchen, in which place alone he was now allowed to enjoy this his great luxury, and only there with many objurgations against the "disgusting habit" which Florinda declared infected the whole house, and made her blush whenever any of her genteel friends came to see her.

He thought it all over again the next evening, and the next, and during part of the fourth—but alas! alas! on that evening the good doctor and his pipe went out together.

Peace to their ashes!

Mrs. Weldover was again a widow, and Herbert was once more without a friend.

His grief was very great, and it was augmented by the fear that Mrs. Weldover would take him out of school to live with her alone, for his dread of her amounted almost to terror.

He was spared this calamity. The afflicted lady became the administratrix of her late husband's estate—and within a few months after his decease she turned his effects into money, rented the house to strangers, and moved away somewhere into that great wilderness—the metropolis.

Herbert's bills became due, and there was no one to pay them.

He knew nothing of Mrs. Weldover's *hegira*, and the proprietors of the school, who were ignorant of his friendless position, after long default in his payments, dismissed him from the institution.

His late home was less than two miles distant on a stage route; he had often travelled it alone, and he was permitted to do so now, with the information that he might return if he could bring the arrears of payments with him.

When he reached his late abode, a strange servant answered the door-bell, and to his inquiries, told him that "Misthress Wuldoffer had moved away from there intirely," and he'd find her somewhere "in the city jist."

Herbert asked her street and number, but the girl could not tell him, and said nobody in the house knew, for there had been "a power o' people asking that same." But if he could read, he would find it all in the "Diritory," and no mistake.

Herbert said of course he could read, and he would go and look her up; and so, with his little pack of clothing and books on his arm, he started for the stage again, feeling quite dignified with the consciousness that he could pay his way to the city, and have several shillings left.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A few evenings after that which had rendered Mr. Simon Blass elate with high hopes of love and fortune, he received a sudden and earnest summons from his sister-in-law to come and see her.

Sanguine that the interview thus required was to inform him of Evelyn's ratification of the important treaty so recently made in her behalf, Simon put himself in the best of trim, and made haste to obey the call.

But when he reached his friend's mansion, he found a very different state of things from what his ardent imagination had painted.

Mrs. Sitterly, but half recovered from a fit of hysterics, received him alone, and he did not need a second glance at the traces of emotion in her face to guess what had taken place.

"Again?" he said.

"Yes—yes—yes—again! and it always will be again, unless——"

"How much does he want now?"

"Want! He wants it all, I think, and means to have it, in time. Just now he only wants—what do you think?"

"I am sure I can't imagine."

"That very piece of property which we have just agreed to give to you and Evelyn—the Holt house and grounds."

"Wh—e—e—w!"

"Yes, he has returned to the city to live, he says, and he would like to be in our neighborhood for 'old acquaintance' sake.'"

"Ah, he's grown witty."

"I don't know about that, but he has certainly grown insolent beyond endurance. He no longer asks, he *demands*, and he even had the impudence to make inquiries about my will."

"This is intolerable—he must be resisted; but how did he know about the Holt house?"

"How does he know everything? Even my thoughts, I believe. He had heard how little it cost me, he said, and he seemed to think he was making quite a moderate request. When I reminded him of the large sums he had received, he replied that the amount was not at all large, that now everything was in my hands, I could afford to be liberal—*and that I must.*"

"It is insufferable."

"And the worst—the worst of all—is that he is to live in the city—near to us if he can—in that very house, if I give it to him——"

"*If* you give it to him—surely you do not mean to submit to such exorbitant claims."

"I don't know; what else can I do, Simon? I would gladly give it to him—or its cost twice over! thrice over! if I could thus be forever rid of him; if I were sure that he would retire to some foreign land, and never, *never* trouble us again."

"Would you?" said Blass, rising and walking the room in an excited manner. "Would you? But you never can be sure of that; you never can depend upon such a man. He always *will* return."

"Yes—yes," said the miserable woman, hiding her face in her hands, as if she would thus exclude the hateful image of her persecutor from her sight. "He *will* come; and *I am always expecting him.* There has not been a ring at the door bell since he was last here, six months ago, which I did not believe to be his. I never ride or walk out, but I fancy that I see him watching me from behind lamp-posts or out of dark halls and passages. I seldom sleep without dreaming of him, with his sardonic smile, and his threatning look. Oh Heaven! It is too horrible! My punishment is greater than my——"

"It is a large bounty that you would pay on his silence," said Blass in a half whisper, "and perhaps the same end might be gained in another way, and for less money—for less money."

"What do you mean?"

"Haven't you a right to defend yourself against a villain who is robbing, almost killing you?" asked Blass, energetically.

"Quite killing me; I shall not live a year in this state of mind."

"Haven't you a *right* to protect your life and property? Hasn't everybody a right to do that?"

"But how, Simon?—what do you mean?"

"I don't know. There are ways."

"If there is any way in which you can extricate me from this trouble, Simon——"

"I did not say that *I* could do it, Louise."

"No—but if you *can*—if you *can* lay this living spectre which haunts me without ceasing, your reward shall be greater, fourfold greater, than anything you have ever dreamed of asking of me. If you cannot, I must yield to his present demands, and be prepared for more and larger ones. And Evelyn's dowry must be withheld."

"Evelyn? Is she all right?"

"Yes. Frederick says it is settled."

"That, at least, is good news. And as to this *robber*," he added, with a fierce and threatening look, "this robber, who would take all—who comes between me and happiness—we shall see. When do you expect to see him again?"

"To-morrow evening in this room."

"Do you think he knows me?"

"He knows every body and every thing. Of course he remembers your wife; he spoke of her to-day."

Blass reflected some minutes in silence, and then said:

"He doesn't know Rook. I am sure he does not know Rook."

"Probably not."

"Certainly not."

"What then?"

"We shall see. Give me time to think. I will see you in the morning, after I have seen my partner. He is shrewd and sharp—far more so than you would suspect from his grave and stolid look. And money is the lever that moves him."

Blass took his leave, and he spent no small part of the night reflecting upon some ideas which had occurred to him in the course of the conversation with Mrs. Sitterly, affording a vague glimpse of hope that he could obtain for her the relief she so greatly desired, and for himself the brilliant prize which was to reward success.

His plans were very indefinite, and all hung upon the co-operation of Rook, whose resources he knew to be peculiar, and whose ingenuity Simon believed to be almost unsurpassed.

That individual, whose sable suit and sable beard, masking half his face, gave him a general hue not unfitting his name, was surprised, on arriving at his office the next morning, to find his partner, the head of the firm, already there, and impatiently awaiting his coming.

He was still more surprised when, with much circumlocution, Blass hinted at a weighty business in which his co-operation was wanted: and. which, though not strictly professional, would pay beyond all precedent.

So sinuously did Simon approach his main proposition, that it was only after a long colloquy, and some very direct and abrupt questions on the part of his less delicate partner, that even a partial understanding was arrived at.

"This man, then—Hassel did you call him?"

"Yes—Hassel."

"Is to be got rid of, silenced, or in some way rendered harmless?"

"Yes—effectually. He is a robber, almost a murderer, whose crimes the law cannot reach. He must be reached some other way. No matter how—he deserves the worst he can get."

Rook did not look or act shocked; he took a pinch of snuff, and said:

"Of course I can do nothing myself, but if I had known it two days sooner——"

"*If—if*—what then?"

"The very man to serve you was here—here in my office. He's sailed, now, for China. Captain Cloots, of the brig Butterfly."

"Who is he? What could he have done?" asked Blass, rapidly.

"To tell who he is, more than his name, would be a difficult matter. I should call him a mulatto. He *says* he is of Portuguese family, and born in this country. He looks as if he might have been a pirate in his day, but whatever he is, he commands a good vessel, which is owned here, and is taking out a regular cargo, for I have seen it for the Company."

Rook, among a multiplicity of other occupations by which he picked up perquisites, was surveyor for one or two Marine Insurance offices, and in this way he had formed the acquaintance of the man he described.

"Well, if he's gone, there is no use talking of him; perhaps he has not."

"It is barely possible, though he was to have sailed yesterday morning, but the wind may not have been favorable. I have not noticed it."

"It has been due south for forty-eight hours, and if that is a favorable wind to get out of this port with, then I don't know what isn't. But if this mulatto Portugo-American is here, then what? What can he do?"

"He wants sailors—or one at least—or he *can* want one, can't he? He can be short-handed."

"Well?"

"And we can give him Hassel."

"How? Hassel don't want to go to sea."

"Probably not. How many men do you suppose are shipped from this port every year as sailors, against their will, impressed by something worse than an English press-gang? Hundreds, sir, hundreds."

"How is it done?"

"By 'putting an enemy in their mouth to steal away their brains,' sir. They are carried aboard in a state of insensibility, and wake up out of sight of land, bound to service for that voyage, be it long or short."

"Well?"

"Well, by such *or some other means* your Mr. Hassel could be got aboard the Butterfly——"

"Yes, *but it is not enough to get him aboard*," said Blass, significantly. "How do you know you could depend on this Cloots?"

"How do I know it? No matter how, since I know it. I read men as I read books; I'll answer for *him* if there is any money to be made."

"What kind of a crew has he?"

"Half of them are negroes, and nearly all the rest are foreigners. They are a hard-looking set."

The plotters discussed Mr. Rook's extemporized plan at some length, and although it did not seem promising to Blass, he was quite ready to give it a trial.

"The first thing, then," he said, "is to learn if this useful man is yet in port."

"I can hardly hope it, but I shall take measures to ascertain. If you will remain here an hour or two——"

"Oh, the deuse, no! Here! I can't stay in this dull place so long."

"Well, call again in an hour or so; if the Butterfly is at her pier, I shall soon be back; but she may have hauled off into the stream, or be on her way down the bay, and yet not outside. I will do my best to learn, but I fear there is little hope of her. She has probably been towed out."

Rook and Blass went forth in different directions, and the latter, after an hour's impatient lounging at a reading room, hurried back to the office, which he found still empty.

After waiting nearly another hour, which seemed to him three, Simon heard the well-known step of his partner ascending the stairs, and behind him the heavier tread of a companion.

Startled with the belief that his thorough-going agent had not only found Cloots, but that he was bringing him with him, Simon hastily retreated into the back room, which formed his private office, and where, although seldom present, he was always represented by his low-backed armchair and his well dusted table.

Prudently resolving not to be seen by the sailor, he closed the door and stood beside it listening, until the two comers entered the front office, but they had scarcely done so before Rook, anxious to impart his news, approached and sought to enter the inner room.

He found the door held from within, but it yielded barely enough to admit him, and was closed quickly upon him.

"Have you brought him?" asked Blass, whisperingly, and with a frightened air.

"Yes, and ready for anything," replied Rook, with a contemptuous look at his companion.

"I—I don't want to see him, you know."

"I see you don't: you needn't."

"You—you must manage it, you know Rook—you and he; you and he. I will furnish the money."

"*I will*," replied the partner, with an emphasis which said that he too was ready for any thing, to gain the prize which seemed so vast—so glittering to him.

His poverty was so absolute; he had so long lived from hand to mouth—that the thousands which were instantly to reward a successful issue to this scheme, allowed him to think of nothing else. They filled his imagination, they swayed his heart; they blinded his conscience; he could see nothing, think of nothing else to compare in importance with them.

It was not his deed, Rook thought, if he should put this man Hassel in the hands of the fearful custodian who was to answer for his never setting foot upon the land again after he had entered his floating prison. It was not his deed; Blass stood behind him; and another stood behind *him;* and both were most respectable people.

Then Hassel was a villain, quite worthy of death; and they were only doing the Law's proper work.

So he argued to himself, for crime when once resolved on by a desperate and unprincipled man, easily finds its seeming justification in his breast.

Although Simon did not suffer himself to be seen by the captain of the Butterfly, he caught a sufficient glimpse of that doughty personage to see that he was a stout, burly, coarse-featured man, with a freckled and yellowish face, and a limp, broad nose which, more than his color, hinted at African lineage.

The bargain was easily made, but long and careful consultation was bestowed upon its details, during which the sable Rook, like a bird of ill omen, flitted from room to room, now sitting "cheek by jowl" along side of the grim sailor, and now returning to his invisible confederate to communicate new suggestions or receive fresh instructions.

Cloots wanted a hand certainly; of course he did. He had well nigh gone off with a short crew, and although his vessel was in the stream, he would bring it back to its pier to further so desirable a purpose. How the able bodied seaman which Rook proposed to furnish him was to be got on board his vessel he would not undertake to say.

That was their business, and Rook agreed to manage it with no other proviso than that the captain was to be on the lookout for him at certain specified hours, on the pier adjacent to his vessel, and accompanied with one or two of his men.

As to the other particulars with which the scheming brain of the lawyer was laboring—let his acts speak.

CHAPTER XIX.

The appointment which the mysterious Mr. Hassel had made with Mrs. Sitterly was faithfully kept; and although, somewhat to his surprise, he was admitted to an immediate audience by that lady, she manifested all, and apparently more than her usual agitation at his approach.

This seemed the stranger, when she informed him, as she promptly did, that she had resolved to comply with his request, unreasonable as she deemed it, and that she had sent for one of her lawyers, a Mr. Huddleton, to give him the requisite instructions for transferring the title.

Hassel was charmed at his easy success, and inquired when the attorney would come, and whether the deed could be made that evening.

The lady replied that she expected him momentarily—but she feared that the affair could not be consummated so soon.

The title, she said, was not yet in her; she did not exactly understand the matter, but there was something about a foreclosure and a Chancery deed. Mr. Huddleton would explain it all when he came. She could not comprehend it.

Hassel was in haste, and fretted at the prospect of delay; but while he spoke the door bell rang, and Mr. Huddleton was announced.

If Mr. Rook had taken a new name he was in no other way disguised. He was confident that Hassel did not know him, and the danger of future recognition by him, if his plans should prove abortive, was not equal he thought to the risk of thwarting them by a present disguise, which, however perfect, might awaken suspicion in a shrewd observer

Mrs. Sitterly introduced him by his assumed name and then added:

"I have sold to Mr. Hassel the Holt property which I recently obtained on foreclosure, and I wish to have it conveyed to him. You had something to do with it—I don't exactly know what, but I suppose you do."

Rook laughed and said he believed he did.

"You foreclosed, I suppose?" said Hassel.

"No, Brown foreclosed," said Rook, looking at Mrs. Sitterly; "I sold it as Master in Chancery."

"Oh you are a Master?" said Hassel, who seemed to understand these things.

"Yes, sir."

"Well? Who did you sell it to?"

"It was bid off by Brown for Mrs. Sitterly. The sale was only a short time ago, and the conveyance has not yet been executed. She expected to convey it to another party, and the deed was to be made directly from me, as Master, to him."

"Oh yes—I see."

"That's it," added Mrs. Sitterly, "and now I suppose it can be made direct to Mr. Hassel. Is not that so?"

"Exactly, if you desire it. The deed has been all ready for some days, excepting putting in the grantee's name, and having it acknowledged."

"Then it can be done *to-night*," said Hassel, eagerly; "why not?"

"It's past office hours now, you know," replied Rook, with pretended dislike to the plan; "and my office is far off—clear down in the lower part of Wall street."

"We can ride down. It won't take half an hour, after we get there."

"After we get there! oh, no, not fifteen minutes; but the trouble is to go so far this evening."

"Oh, I'll pay for that," replied Hassel, who was most anxious to secure the great prize before something should turn up to snatch it from him. He knew that delays were dangerous.

"I don't like to incommode you, Mr. Huddleton," said Mrs. Sitterly, "but I should be glad if you could accommodate Mr. Hassel, by attending to this business this evening. It is not yet six o'clock; I know that he is in a great hurry, and I really feel as if I should be glad to have the matter off my mind."

Hassel looked much pleased, and Rook replied:

"I can refuse you nothing, Madam; but I

have not dined; I will step out and get some refreshments——"

"By no means, sir; I will order something for you and Mr. Hassel, here."

Rook remonstrated; but the lady insisted. The bell was rung, and a collation was so quickly served, that one might have imagined it had been standing all ready for that purpose. A very nice lunch it was, too; and with it was brought in a stand of decanters, containing several varieties of liquor.

When a table had been wheeled up before the visitors, and the viands and bottles placed upon it, Mrs. Sitterly delicately withdrew, leaving the men to eat, and especially to drink as freely as they chose, without the restraint of a lady's eye upon their movements. A man-servant had remained to wait upon them, but him Rook dismissed, with an intimation that he would be summoned, if wanted.

"Everything is within our reach here; we'll get along," he said.

Black Charley seemed to think that fact was rather a reason for his staying than going, as he glanced momentarily at the sinister-looking men. But he obeyed, and "reported progress" to his mistress, who satisfied his scruples by saying that it was "all right."

"This is very comfortable," said Rook, as he looked over the table and disposed his plate and napkin for action. "It is a pleasure to do business for a lady like Mrs. Sitterly. Don't you think so, Mr. Tassel?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the other, smiling; "but my name is Hassel, not Tassel."

"Ah, I beg your pardon; well, let's see, what have we here, Sherry, Port, Cogniac, Hollands; ah, there's something to give a man an appetite."

Rook took some Hollands, and Hassel helped himself to brandy, not stintingly. Neither of the men seemed to think the wine worthy of a second look.

They ate and drank freely, Rook leading the conversation on the subject of the fine property which his companion had purchased. He expatiated on its value, and grew eloquent in depicting its advantageous location and surroundings, for he had taken the precaution to go thoroughly over it that day, in order that he might be well posted in his evening's assumed business.

The lawyer talked rapidly, ate rapidly, and drank very frequently, in all of which feats, except the first, his companion seemed to maintain the race with him pretty nearly neck and neck.

Hassel said little, but that little gave evidence of being well pleased with Rook's remarks, with his dinner, and, above all, with his extraordinary good fortune in becoming proprietor of the valuable domain which was to pass, within the next hour, into his hands.

There was no sham about Rook's drinking, and no shirking; he knew that he could stand what few other men could, in that line, and he was resolved to set the example as long as the other would follow it.

Hassel grew heady; he became almost confidential towards his companion, whom he pronounced a "tip top sawyer;" he hinted at his own future wealth, and held out encouragement to Mr. "Hud—Hud—dle—bung" that he should be his legal adviser and managing agent, with a very liberal stipend.

It required some nice calculation on the part of Rook to decide upon the exact stage of inebriation to which it would be desirable to restrict his future patron, who was fast becoming voluble and maudlin. They had a long ride to take, and it was necessary that Hassel should at least have command of his limbs. But when he thought the time had come, he announced it, and the intoxicated man signified his readiness to go.

He took out a handful of change, and said: "I—I'll pay."

"Pay what?"

Hassel looked about him with a bewildered air, for a moment, and then said:

"Oh, hang it, if I didn't think we were in a rest—ta—tu—turent. Blamed if I didn't. Come on, it's all right; come on."

Rook repressed his laughter, and the two went forth together, arm in arm, for the lawyer thought it necessary to steady his companion, to keep him from comprehending the extent of his intoxication.

The fresh air revived him somewhat, but not sufficiently to keep him, when they came into Broadway, from vociferously hailing three stages which were going in the wrong direction, and several more which were not going to Wall street.

When they had stopped and entered a stage, the obtusity of Hassel's perceptions was so apparent, that the lawyer began to calculate upon the feasibility of changing his programme of action, and instead of going in the first instance to his office, to take his unsuspicious victim directly to the embraces of the expectant Cloots.

But several reflections made him hesitate to decide on this course. The hour was a little earlier than his confederate would probably expect him; and possibly a little earlier than the best practicable one for the completion of his plans on the pier. There would be more danger of observation at eight than at nine o'clock; although little at either hour at the Butterfly's wharf, which the conspirators had taken care should be about equidistant between the Wall and Fulton ferries.

Yet another reason influenced Rook in adhering to his original plan, and that was the belief that their long, slow ride, with its frequent stoppages, would do much towards sobering Hassel: a result which at his office he was prepared to prevent with additional potations, which he thought would fully reduce the yielding fortress of Reason.

It was nearly eight o'clock when they reached Wall street, which of course at that hour was well-nigh deserted. Most of the banks and many other offices, indeed, were lighted, but they were generally in the sole possession of the porters; though here and there a perplexed teller or book-keeper might be seen puzzling over a false balance, or searching for some tantalizing error, which defied all his quest, and kept him at that late hour from his expecting family and his waiting meal.

Mr. Rook's office was something more than half-way down the street, and they of course found it dark and unoccupied. The lawyer struck a light and said:

"We are here at last, and now we'll proceed at once to business."

"Y—yes, straight away," replied Hassel, with a stammering tongue, which showed that he was still deeply under the influence of the cogniac.

"Mrs. Sitterly keeps good liquors! I'll say that for her," resumed Rook.

"She does, sir—fact! Mrs. Slittery does that thing, sir. She must be a ju—judge of liquor, sir. I—I honor her for it, sir—I do, Mr. Hubbledum."

"I think we can afford to drink to her health. I don't often take anything myself——"

"Nor I, too; it's jes my case, sir."

"But that little taste we had up there has quite given me a hankering for more. I didn't take much; nor you either, I believe."

"Oh, no; nothin' to sinnify."

"I usually keep a little old brandy here for clients; though it doesn't get touched once a month, I believe."

The black bottle and the tumblers which, Rook took out of a drawer in the base of his library, looked as clean and bright as if they had been recently prepared for use; but Hassel was far past noticing any such trifling inconsistencies.

Both drank again freely, and then the lawyer produced his "Master's deed," and proceeded to read it to his blinking friend, who nodded several times with sleep before he had read the long document through.

He had prepared it with the same care as if it had been a genuine document, for he did not know to how vigilant a scrutiny it might be subjected; but if he could have calculated upon the present acquiescent state of his dupe's mind, he might as well have copied and read to him a portion of Magna Charta.

"Now, you see," he said, nudging Hassel to wake him up, "all it wants is the insertion of your name here, as party of the second part."

"Yes—part of second party. I understand all about that. Go—go ahead."

Mr. Rook, after inquiring the full name of his drowsy client, wrote it in the deed in a bold, strong hand, which showed no disturbance of either his nerves or his conscience.

"Now, then," said Hassel, whose increasing interest in the transaction was partly arousing him. "Now, then, sign it, and give it to me!"

"But it must be acknowledged, you know, before a commissioner."

"Oh, yes; but never mind that to—to-night. I don't feel well. I'll bring it back in the morning, and have that done."

"It's better to finish it. We'll just step around to a commissioner, and do it in a twinkling."

"They won't be in. It's too—too late. I want to go home," said Hassel, whose yielding temper seemed suddenly to have given place to a spirit of opposition.

The lawyer, whose plan had thus far worked so smoothly, began to be alarmed at the sudden change in Hassel's deportment, which he feared was to be attributed to something which had excited his suspicions. He was afraid to urge his wishes, lest the now irritated man should grow obstinate and unmanageable. He tried a more adroit game.

"Well well," he said; "if you are in a hurry let us postpone the delivery of the deed for the present. It isn't exactly business-like for me to deliver it until it is perfect; and you can come for it—let me see: to-morrow and next day I shall be out of town; say the day after that."

"Oh, thunder, no! I can't wait as long as that. I am going out of town myself——"

"I havn't signed the deed yet. Let it all rest a few days."

"Blast me if I do! She might change her mind before that, and there'd be fifty thousand dollars gone. No; come—come on. We'll finish it now. I feel better."

Rook went to the black bottle, and said he believed he would take a drop more before he went out. Wouldn't Mr. Hassel do the same?

Hassel rather thought he would, as he did not feel well—just a drop.

His liberal host poured out a third of a tumbler-full, mixed about a teaspoonful of water with it, and telling the tipsy man that it was about half and half, gave it to him.

He swallowed it, of course, and the two went forth, Hassel still expressing his fears that it was too late to find any commissioner in his office, and Rook as positively asserting a contrary belief.

"Most of them, of course, have gone hours and hours ago," he said, "but I know one, a bachelor, who *lives* in his office. He sleeps there, and keeps it open late at night on purpose to catch such odd jobs which there is no one else to do. A lot of them he gets, too: he's a sharp fellow."

"Is it far?"

"A few blocks off. We turn here."

They did turn there, and at the next corner, and at the next, until Hassel had no more idea in what direction he was going than if he had been blindfolded. But every turn and every foot of progress which they made was bringing the pedestrians nearer to the river and nearer to the Butterfly, whose impatient captain was at that moment pacing the pier, beside which she lay, and ever and anon coming up to the line of the street, where he expected to meet his confederate and their victim.

Rook talked rapidly as they went along, in order to occupy the attention of his companion, and keep him from noticing either the distance they went or the direction.

Chiefly he talked about the Holt property, dwelling especially upon many favorable points about the house and grounds which he had particularly noticed that day.

This was a subject of which Hassel never tired, and as his last draught of liquor had begun to take decided effect, he seemed to have quite lost his irritability, and to have relapsed into his former maudlin state.

The vision of coming wealth again loomed up before his excited imagination; he hinted broadly at some potent spell by which he could move the portals to the temple of Mammon, and said that if he had not been a simpleton in modesty, and a pattern of virtue, he would long since have been nearly or quite a millionaire. He would be yet. He would be beyond the necessity of trudging about the streets on a dark night to get a "contemp'ble deed" signed. He would. He'd have his carriage, and one driver before and another behind, jes like Mrs. Slittery; the same livery, too, for he was a kind of relation, jes as much as somebody else he could name if he chose.

Rook laughed and encouraged his tipsy tongue to wag. They were very near the end of a street which ran at right angles with the river, and which terminated within a few rods of the Butterfly's pier. The lawyer, indeed, was getting into a state of great agitation as the crisis drew nigh which was to decide upon the success of his murderous plot.

"Some folks feel very big," continued Hassel; "they stand very high; mighty high, but they can be taken down a peg or two when the time comes; when the time——But what—what's this? Where we got to, Mr. Buddletum? There's masts and ships; why we're close to the river, man. There aint any offices *here*."

"Aint there?" replied the other, confidently. "So much you know about it. It's the very place to do the—the marine business. These captains and mates have lots of swearing to do about clearances and cargoes, and one thing and another. It's the very place for a commissioner."

"Well—not—across there, any way. There's nothing but ships there."

"I know, but it's better walking, and we have to go a block or two down yet, and we can see from that side whether there is a light in the window. Come along."

Rook and his companion were walking arm in arm, and the latter held back forcibly at first, but presently, with some indistinct mutterings, he yielded and crossed the street.

The night was moderately dark. It was clear and starlight, but there was no moon.

A man stood on the river side of the street as they crossed, a few yards from the spot where they came upon the sidewalk, and seemed to be watching them. His figure showed but indistinctly in the dim light, and Rook, who felt that all now depended upon the promptness and vigilance of the hired desperado, indulged the hope that it was he. But the man turned and walked off in the opposite direction.

Rook and Hassel went on, very slowly now. The very next pier northward, which was but a few yards distant, was that at which, if at all, they must meet the mulatto master. The street was nearly silent. The noises from the river and the ferry landings alone were heard, blended with the peal of distant bells, the hum of distant wheels, and now and then the answered signal of the watchman's rattle.

They have gained the pier now, and Hassel is urging his companion to go faster, but Rook is dragging, and darting quick glances to the right, down into the deeper darkness which broods over the wharf, where the shadows of the tall ships clothe everything in impenetrable gloom. He can see nothing moving, but he talks loudly for a signal to his confederate, if he is at hand.

"Faster, did you say, Mr. *Hassel?* Oh, yes, I'll go faster in a minute; *I'm looking for the light in Cloots's window.* That's the commissioner's name—*Cloots*."

He spoke loudly, and he was answered. Two men sprang out of the shadows; a brief signal of recognition passed between them and Rook; and Hassel, almost at the same instant, felt an iron-like grasp tightening upon his throat, which prevented his giving utterance to any sound. He was quietly dragged off the sidewalk into the darkness which shrouded the pier, and in a few minutes more he was on board the brig, quite insensible, yet bearing sufficient evidences of intoxication to sustain the character which Cloots attributed to him, that of a tipsy sailor, who had shipped for the voyage, and had been sent aboard by an agent at the close of his parting spree.

All had been done too quickly and with too little noise to attract attention from the few watchmen who were supposed to be protecting the interests of that quiet quarter of the city.

The miserable man was put in close custody for the night, and when he awoke to consciousness he was silenced by threats, and was informed that he had been regularly shipped as a sailor for the voyage to China, and would be compelled to do duty as such. His alarm and rage were beyond bounds, but he was at least spared for the time a knowledge of the worse fate which his captors designed for him.

The authors of this great crime exulted in their success, and the captain received from his equally nefarious confederate a large installment of his stipulated reward, with a promise of the remainder when he next returned to port, with satisfactory assurances that the dreadful work was completed.

At daylight the next morning the Butterfly left her moorings, and was towed down the bay, and long before Mrs. Sitterly descended to her late breakfast, her dreaded enemy was beyond the Narrows, on his way to China, or to a more distant port.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

FALSE AND FAIR.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

"What an exceedingly beautiful girl!" exclaimed one gentleman to another, with whom he was walking, and who had just lifted his hat to three ladies in passing. "Pray, who is she?"

"There were three ladies in the group to which I bowed," his companion replied; "as I presume it is necessary to inform you, as you seem to have seen but one. And that one, to whom you doubtlessly refer, is the eldest daughter of Mrs. Ward Bryant. Her mother and her sister, almost as perfect a brunette as she is a blonde, accompanied her."

"What! our old preceptor's widow? Then I must have known these girls as children. Do tell me something more of them, particularly of the fair one, who must be Anna. I must call upon them immediately, and I would fain know something of them before doing so. She interests me exceedingly."

"Anna? Yes. It is easy to see that. But, for my part, I like Emeline far better."

"Brunettes are so spiteful and fiery!"

"More ardent and intense, doubtless, in all their emotions than their fairer sisters. But what say you to a cool blonde, who systematically deceives the best of mothers, and whose quiet, but indomitable will is daily forcing her into a course of conduct which, while it is soon to bring ruin upon herself, will inflict the deepest sorrow upon that mother's heart?"

"You do not intend to insinuate that Anna Bryant is guilty of such conduct. With that pure face and gentle mien—deceitful and a liar! No, no. I do not so read that lovely face."

"Yet it is even so. You did not see the shifting gray eyes that never meet any gaze with innocent frankness, nor, in your enthusiastic admiration of the whole face, did you detect the lines of firmness about the mouth, that certainly is lovely in color, nor the heaviness of the lower face, so surely indicative of an obstinate temper and low instincts."

"No, I did not. But you excite my curiosity. Pray, tell me, if you are at liberty to do so, in what manner my old friend's child is proving herself so unworthy of the name she bears."

"One proof of my assertions you shall see for yourself. The ladies have turned, and are about to meet us again. You see this young man, who has just brushed past us—the one with that eccentric coat, and hat set jauntily aside, and air that marks him as having his place on the border ground, between gentility and vulgarity. Observe what passes as he meets Anna Bryant."

There was an instant's pause. The ladies advanced slowly, and as they neared the young man, whom the friends were observing, Anna directed the attention of her mother and sister to some object in a shop window. As she did so she pulled her handkerchief from her pocket, and a folded paper fluttered slowly to the ground. There was an almost imperceptible interchange of glances, and then, as the ladies swept on, the young man stooped and lifted the fallen paper.

"Was that done by accident or design?" inquired the second of the two friends; and the other answered only by a grave glance, that told the opinion he had been forced to form. In another moment he had lifted his hat to Mrs. Bryant, and was shaking her cordially by the hand. But the pleasure of his renewed acquaintance, with a lady he had highly esteemed from his youth, was marred by the thoughts awakened by the incident he had just witnessed.

The acquaintance thus re-commenced was not suffered to die out. By Mrs. Bryant's invitation, Mr. Selden became a frequent visitor at her house.

In company with his friend, Mr. Malten, in whose company we first saw him, and who was something more than a friend of the sprightly Emeline, he spent many an evening at this hospitable home. Here, and elsewhere, he had many opportunities of observing the conduct of Anna. Her beauty continued to make a strong impression upon him, though he did not fail to note imperfections which Mr. Malten had pointed out, and to be painfully affected by them. They denoted a singular lack of balance and of harmony in her character, and he soon had occasion to see that frankness and straight-forward honesty formed no part of it.

Winning and gentle in manner, there was yet at times a demureness that showed that her external acts were not the key to her inner emotions. In her society there was even a painful sense of something hidden, of a mind occupied with different, far different thoughts and designs from any that appeared on the surface. Had not his attention been so early called to her defects, he might not have soon distrusted her, especially as she betrayed toward him that flattering deference which, coming from a beautiful and intelligent girl, it is so difficult for any man, and especially a heart-free bachelor, to resist.

The young man, who had encountered her in the street on the day of his first meeting with the family, Mr. Selden never met at Mrs. Bryant's house. But he often saw him on the promenade, and in all public places. More than once he witnessed, himself unobserved, a meeting between him and Anna. And he could not but perceive that there was an understanding between them, even before he chanced to meet them at a rural resort, a few miles from the city, where they were walking arm-in-arm and in close conversation, so absorbing that they did not see him until he was close upon them.

Anna started and blushed on seeing him. But she only returned his salutation by a slight bend, and seemed indisposed to prolong the encounter. He returned to the city by the same boat that conveyed her, but she was no longer accompanied by the person he had seen in her society. There was a party of young friends upon the boat, and Anna remained with them until just before reaching the city. Then, as by an apparent accident, she sought Mr. Selden's side; and while expressing her surprise at meeting him, contrived to explain that the person he had seen in her company was an accidental acquaintance, who had overtaken her when she had carelessly lost sight of her friends, and had volunteered to take her to them. Her manner and smile were very winning, as she added:

"I should not have mentioned this, Mr. Selden, only that I feared you might speak to my mother of having met me in the company of a stranger, and thus cause her alarm. Poor mamma! she is so tremblingly watchful over Emeline and me, that it seems very cruel to cause her a moment's uneasiness. So please don't mention this foolish contretemps, Mr. Selden."

Disgusted and contemptuous at her plausible falsehood, Selden could only bow his head. He dared not trust himself to speak, and he only hoped that his stately bend might not be taken as an assent to her request. He had never been so sorely puzzled. The character of informer was most distasteful to him, and yet it seemed the plain duty of some friend to inform Mrs. Bryant of Anna's frequent association with a person who was not admitted to her home.

Months before, Mr. Malten had given him the first proofs of Anna's systematic deception of her mother. But Malten had long been intimate with the family, and he was now the promised husband of Emeline Bryant. Yet he had not spoken, and should one who had no such claim to be admitted to the family confidence intrude such evil tidings?

Several days passed away, during which he debated the subject in his own mind, and did not present himself at Mrs. Bryant's. At the close of this period, as he was walking just at sunset in some nearly deserted public gardens, he again encountered Anna in company with the obnoxious individual. They were seated on a bench in a retired part of the grounds, in earnest conversation. They did not see him, and after a few moments separated. As they rose, the man's last audible words reached Mr. Selden's ear.

"I shall be there with the carriage at nine precisely. Do not fail me."

"No, not to-night. I am going out with Emmie and Mr. Malten. As we first planned, that will be much better."

She gave her hand to her companion, and he raised it to his lips. Then in silence they each sought a different exit.

That evening Mr. Selden was early at Mrs. Bryant's. He had determined to delay no longer a communication that every moment rendered more important. He doubted not now that Anna was about to elope with the ill-looking fellow in whose company he had so often seen her.

While hesitating how to introduce the subject, Mrs. Bryant aided him by remarking her satisfaction in the prospect of Emeline's approaching marriage to Mr. Malten, a man whose character and disposition, as well as his social and business position, left nothing to be desired.

"I can only hope," she added, "that Anna may be as fortunate. She has caused me much solicitude. Two or three years since she made the acquaintance of Mark Sheldon, a young man of good origin, but incorrigibly given over to dissolute habits, vulgar in his manners, and, except in a certain bold, dashing sort of good looks, entirely unprepossessing. He was very determined in his pursuit of her, and I was obliged to exclude him from the list of our visitors. Since that time Anna has yielded to my representations, and ceased to acknowledge his acquaintance. But she has never seemed to enjoy the society of others as much, or to be quite herself, since that time. I sometimes fear that Sheldon had obtained so strong a hold upon her heart, as to render her unable to forget him, though it is difficult to understand how a person of her refined tastes can even tolerate him. My only hope is that she may yet win the affection of some worthy man, and forget her quondom lover."

Here was an opening not to be lost; and though he knew his words must give deepest pain to the mother's heart, Mr. Selden dared not hesitate longer. In as few words as possible he told all he knew and had seen, and then placed himself and his services at Mrs. Bryant's disposal.

He had hardly concluded when a hasty ring at the bell announced visitors, and in a moment more Emeline and Mr. Malten entered, in haste, and almost breathless with consternation. The tidings they brought blanched the mother's face with dread, and braced the nerves of Mr. Selden to any exertion which might avert the threatened disgrace from the beloved family.

An hour before a note had been handed in at the door of the friend's house whom the Misses Bryant were visiting, addressed to Anna. Immediately after receiving it she had retired to the chamber where her wraps had been deposited, had been observed to read it there with many marks of agitation, and soon after had departed quite alone, and only seen by the servant who let her out. Emeline had been in another apartment, and ignorant of her sister's absence for a considerable time. Even now she could not even form a theory of the cause of her strange conduct, though it was easy to perceive that the suspicions of Mr. Malten took the same course as those of the mother and Mr. Selden.

It is unnecessary here to describe the pursuit of the fugitive. It is sufficient that it was successful, and that ere morning Anna was discovered, and induced by the entreaties of Mr. Selden and Mr. Malten to return home. In another hour she would have been the wife of Mark Sheldon, and beyond their influence.

Mr. Selden was the most generous of men. As the months passed on, and he saw Anna—pale, subdued, and apparently deeply penitent and sorrowful for her fault—he could not find it in his heart to withhold the forgiveness her every act and look seemed to crave. He first pitied, then sought excuses for her conduct. Perhaps her mother had been harsh in her dismissal of Mark Sheldon, and a feeling of generous indignation at any injustice toward him might have served to excite her imagination, and cause her to believe she loved him, and to be willing to make amends by becoming his wife.

"These men—men of Mark Sheldon's stamp—have specious tongues," he would repeat to himself. "The poor girl was doubtless deceived in his character, and with generous trust believed all his promises and protestations. She is very young and inexperienced: surely I, who, with greater age and wider knowledge of mankind, do err many a time and oft, have no right to judge her harshly."

If he had added that her gentle type of beauty was always most attractive to him—that only his early knowledge of her deceit had prevented his loving her from the first—he might have made a plainer statement of the case, and might have arrived at a more satisfactory analysis of his present feelings.

The truth was that he loved Anna Bryant, as he should have known, the moment he found himself thoroughly forgiving her, for nothing else could have been such convincing proof of the fact.

Scarcely more than a year after her elopement with Mark Sheldon, Anna Bryant became the wife of Mr. Selden. She had received his addresses humbly and gratefully, had pleaded her unworthiness when he asked her to become his wife, but had yielded to his entreaties. Afterward she had responded to his manifestations of affection with a half shy, half reluctant tenderness, that, while it left no room for doubt, fascinated him into complete forgetfulness of her past.

Her character seemed to have undergone an entire change. That she had forgotten her former lover, and had given her heart unreservedly to the present one, no one but Mr. Malten seemed to doubt. He had found his warnings disregarded, and had therefore wisely kept silent, after the engagement was announced. His heart alone sunk with a sudden weight and chill of misgiving when he saw his friend stand at the altar with a bride whom he mentally characterized "false as fair."

For a long time his fears seemed destined to no realization. Selden was happy. There was no cloud upon the horizon of his life's hopes; there might have been a shadow, but it was so dim that even he was scarcely conscious of it. It was a necessity of his nature to trust fully when he trusted; and when two or three petty instances of deceit on the part of Anna came to his knowledge, her pretty penitence speedily won his forgiveness, and he firmly believed that these were but the last struggles of a temptation she was fast overcoming forever.

Mark Sheldon had left the city soon after his plans were thwarted in the elopement. When Anna had been married about two years, he again made his appearance there. Rumor said he had been living a wild and lawless life in some of the southwestern cities, and certainly his countenance bore deep impress of a dissipated career. A man more utterly repulsive in his aspect to a woman of refinement, would seldom be met outside the haunts of the fraternity to whom he now openly belonged.

It is not known how or in what manner Anna renewed her acquaintance with him, though after-revelations favored the belief in the minds of many persons that she had never lost sight of him, nor ceased her intercourse. That she had renewed it was known to most of her acquaintances, and more than one person had seen her in his company before any one could summon courage enough to point out the facts to her husband.

So, hesitating from day to day, while rumor made itself busy with the name of Anna Selden, no lips uttered the tale of her folly until too late. She eloped with Mark Sheldon, and this time her plans were too well arranged to admit of failure. During her husband's temporary absence she left her home, and her infant son in the cradle—left all the delights and luxuries that love had gathered about her, and the sure protection of a generous and faithful affection—to accompany the ruined gamester upon his precarious and sinful career.

"Seek her, if you will," Mr. Selden said to Mr. Malten, now the husband of Emeline Bryant. "Draw on me for all needed monies; but do not bring her before my sight. Henceforth she must be dead to me. I have loved, and trusted, and forgiven. Henceforth love and trust are dead, and forgiveness impossible. And yet, for the sake of many sweet memories, I would have her saved from deeper degradation, more complete ruin."

But for many a year the quest was vain. The broken-hearted mother performed, as well as she might, the offices so heartlessly neglected, to the child of her daughter. Mr. Selden united his household to hers, and was as a son to her. But gloom rested upon that once happy home, which a daughter's and a wife's transgressions had filled with unutterable sorrow Forever, in this life, the innocent suffer for the guilty, and bear the heavy pangs of sorrow for the wrong-doing of the beloved ones.

And so the years passed slowly away.

One wintry morning, a woman's form, half concealed in the whirling snow, crouched within the doorway of a lofty mansion. In the early dawn it lay there, and when the sun stole up and threw its rays down between the rows of tall houses, it was then still so motionless that the few passers, at that early hour, were puzzled to know whether sleep or death enchained her there.

One, more bold or curious than the rest, ran down the area, and repeated to the wondering servant the surmises that the little group assembled in the street had been bandying among themselves. The door was opened, a shriek of alarm from the old servant's lips disturbed the inmates of the house at their morning meal, and presently strong arms had lifted and borne into the hall the still, cold form.

Pale brow, sunken cheeks, and hands all hardened and knotted by toil, were there. Rags wrapped the form from which all grace had not fled. even with the rigidity of death. But the well-remembered hair of sunny brown, with the ripple of gleaming gold in its glossy length, betrayed the wanderer's name, though many a line of silver streaked its bright tresses. Anna Bryant had come home to die upon her mother's threshold.

They bore her in, and laid her down at the feet of the three whose lives her sin had made all sorrowful—the mother, the husband, the bright-haired boy who could couple his mother's name only with shame.

What a warning in her sad career! Stooping to deceit in her youth, living for years an acted lie, accepting an honorable love only to trample upon it, wearing an honorable name only to sully it with shame, bestowing upon her innocent child a heritage of disgrace, and plunging at last into a career from which there was no return, she but exemplified the inevitable law of the swift gradations of vice. No girl who wilfully and systematically deceives an affectionate parent, ought ever to be trusted in any relation of life. And he who takes such an one as his wife does so at a peril he can little estimate.

* * *

CALL him wise whose actions, words, and steps are all a clear *because* to a clear *why*.

GEMS CANNOT WIN THE HEART.

BY TAMAR ANNE KERMODE.

Gems cannot win the heart.
Though pure and bright
May be their light,
Can *they* true joy impart?
Ah! no. Life's hidden, deep, mysterious strings,
Are never touched by these cold, glittering things.

What though the diamond's blaze
May lovely seem,
And like a glorious dream
May be its sparkling rays;
They never light the waves which onward roll,
The surging waters of the struggling soul!

Give, says the lonely heart,
Not jewels from the mine—
For these I do not pine—
In these I have no part.
Richer and dearer are the gifts I crave,
Withhold them not—my life they'll bless and save.

Affection's tender care;
Love shining in the eyes
Of those whose love we prize:
These make our pathway fair;
These are the gifts I crave: gold cannot buy
These jewels; these alone can bless and satisfy.

Baltimore, Feb. 19th, 1861.

GOLD HUNTING ON THE GILA.

BY DR. S. COMPTON SMITH.

Old Joe Standish had a wide fame among the gold hunters, as a spinner of yarns; and although he was not unfrequently suspected of stretching a point a little, to make a forcible illustration, none ever doubted the truth of the main incidents of his stories. The following was considered one of his best yarns.

"Well, as I've said afore, Doc., Bill Munson and I was boys together in the employ of the old 'Rocky Mountain,' and many's the tight spree we've had on't, out on the Columby, and the Yaller Stone, and way down on the Arkansaw—and for that ar' matter, *all over* the Injun country.

"That same Bill Munson and me, has knowd all sorts o' times in our day; and I reckon ef that ar' critter they calls the 'elephant,' really does exist any whar, he and I's seen about as much on him, as any livin' humans! The last observation we had ov the beauty, was down an the Heely; and that's the yarn I'm goin' to spin to-night.

"Yer see, me and Bill had been down to Saint Vrain's fort, at the mouth ov Cherry, on the South Fork of the Platte; and arter a good time on't among the boys thar, we got credits for a couple packs of Injun notions, and took a fresh start for the mountains. Well, we trapped up along Cherry, and down Vermillion, and then struck over across the divide ag'in to Cherry, and followed up through the hill, into the South Park, and on to the headwaters of Arkansaw. Beaver was plentier then, than they be in these days, and we had made up a good many plews, catching them in the sides of the hills, as we went.

"Our luck was so good, and we was so bizzy tending our traps, curin' our pelts, and keeping our eyes skinned for Sioux horse thieves, that cold weather come down on us afore we thought on't. I tell yer the wild winter winds comes down through them gulches and mountain passes, cruel, and we seen by the way our hosses humped tharselves of a morning, 'twas about time we was lookin' out for winter quarters; so we concluded to strike northward through the Pine Hills, afore the snow got too deep on 'em, and winter over in the Old Park, among the Utahs, where we knowed our nags would live high on buffaler grass, while we could trade with the Injuns, and live as high on buffaler meat.

"Among them Utahs was an old feller they called, in thar lingo, '*Big Bison.*' This old chap traded a heap o' pelts for our kickshaws; and one day, arter all his plews was gone, he wanted a knife Bill had in his belt.

"'Well,' says Bill, 'yer can hev it for jist ten beavers.'

"'I haint got 'em,' said Big Bison.

"'I reckon, then, I'll hev to keep the knife. It's took a heap o' Sioux skelps, and maybe it'll hev to raise more hair for the thievin' dogs.'

"'Twas a fust rate tool, was that 'ar knife, and when the old Injun heered it had took skelps, he couldn't sleep for thinkin' on't; so the next mornin' he came to Bill, and said he—

"'Yer knows I aint got no more plews for yer; but here's some yaller sand I got down on the Heely. So ef yer'll trade me the skalpin' knife for it, it's yours.' So saying, Big Bison threw down a bit o' antelope skin, with nigh on to a pound ov the real shiny stuff tied up in it.

"'Well, I don't care ef I do,' said Bill, as he opened the skin and seen the beautiful shinin' grain lying thar, all clean and bright as a bag full o' Saint Leroy dollars. 'I do'nt—care—ef—I—do,' and he handed the knife to the old feller, who went off grinnin' at the good bargin he'd made.

"Arter he'd gone, Bill haw-haw'd right out—'I tell yer, Joe, it's *gold! pure* GOLD! and is worth at least two hundred and fifty dollars! That's a pretty good day's work for us,—ha, old boy!'

"Well, arter that ar' trade, Bill couldn't think ov anything else than the 'yaller sand,' and that night he dreamed o' makin' a break for the Heely, and climbing over hills of pure gold, and getting bogged down in deep snow-banks, made up of nothin' but 'yaller sand;' and the fust thing he did in the mornin' was to find Big Bison and pump him about the Heely, and the location o' the gold diggings thar.

"For two or three days he and the old Injun would be off by tharselves; and anything Bill had in his pack the old chap could get now without the pelts. I never knowed my pardner so liberal with a redskin afore—I knowed he was pumpin' him good.

"One night, arter Bill and Big Bison had been out together all day in the valley, Bill came back to camp jest about the gladdest chap I ever did see. I seed him a good ways off; he was grinnin' like a wild cat, and when he seen I was lookin' out for him, he fetched a couple of the loudest kind of yells, and spurred his mustang right unto camp; and jumping from his saddle, gin another reg'lar war-whoop that almost started the Utahs from thar village.

"'It's all right, old boy!' said he, as he hit me a blow on the breast that knocked me almost inter the fire; 'it's all right, Joe! We must câche these 'ere traps, old chap, and put right out for the Heely!'

"'The Heely, Bill!' said I—'are you crazy?—what's come over yer now?'

"'Hip! Hip! *hi!* We're bound for the Heely, boy! I'm arter the gold! There's heaps on't thar! Big Bison's told me all about it,—so let's gather up the nags and get ready for a start! I reckon it's better'n trappin' and toting pelts, *anyhow!* Why, we can make our fortin in jest no time; and then this child's for Taos and the Mexican senoritas! *Hip! hip! ho'ya!*'

"So saying, Bill stripped his horse, and pitched in to overhauling our traps and packages scattered about the camp.

"Well, the upshot on't was, arter tradin' with the Utahs for a couple packs ov dried buffaler meat, he and I made a câche of everything we had, but a little pack o' tradin' kickshaws to use on the way, ef need be, and leaving our mustangs, all but the two we rid, and one for the pack, with the friendly Utahs, we took the great war trail leading down towards the Camanche country. This trail kept along to the east-'ard ov the Big Mountains, so that we had good grass and water all the way, 'cept when we had to cross the spurs, which was yet cover'd with snow. Game was plenty, so that we reached the head waters ov Canada and the Picos afore we ever had occasion to open one of our packs ov jerked meat. But when we struck westward thro' the mountain passes, in the direction of the starvin' Ryo Grandy, where buffaler is never found in the winter, and, for that 'ar matter, seldom at any season, we had to feed on our dried provisions; and by the time we had reached the Mexican settlement, we had been out of food for nigh onto a week, and I tell yer what, Doc., that ar' was the fust time I ever knowed what it was to be real, right-down hungry.

"I proposed to Bill to kill our pack hoss, and tote his luggage ourselves; but he wouldn't listen to it a moment, he said he knowed we was close on to the Ryo Grandy settlement, and ef we could hold out one more day, on roasted lariat, we'd reach plenty. Well, so it turned out, for the same evenin' we come suddenly upon a rancho, and killed a cow to eat. That ar' time, I reckon, we got a distant view ov the critter. But bym bye we seed more of the cussed brute, than I ever hope to see ag'in.

"We lived pretty high on the Ryo Grandy, and made up for lost time. But we didn't stop long among the greasers, for Bill was in a high old hurry to get among the 'yaller sand'—as the old Injun called it, and was afraid—he said—he might be tempted to indulge too freely in their fiery *mezcal*, and so let the cat out o' the bag; and one day we started up the river for a piece, till we had cleared the ranch, and then struck west'ard ag'in toward the head waters ov the Heely.

"We'd laid in a little stock ov what the greasers called *panale*, at the ranche. It was parched corn ground up with sugar and other fixin's, and for ten blessed days we had nothing else to live on but this. But we didn't grumble, so long as the grass held out, and our critters got enough to eat; for we'd been told thar war plenty buffaler on the upper Heely,—so we traveled on, keeping our eyes skinned for Comanch and Kies (Kioways), and hoping to find some kind ov game, but we didn't see hoof-mark, nor other sign of any living thing, larger than horned frogs and sich varmints.

"Big Bison had directed Bill to a high bluff on the Heely, just whar the river takes to the mountains, and a little below the mouth of the San Francisco, that jines it from the north. This was the very spot whar the Injun said he scooped the 'yaller sand' from the mud ov the river.

"We had took our last drink of panale and water, and the same day we struck the hill, and the Heely was now but a few hours off, and I begun to get mighty rantankerous for somethin' to eat. But not a thing was thar to be found but prickley pears, and them didn't satisfy hunger.

"All this time, Bill stood it like a major. He didn't let on he was hungry at all, but I knowed all the time, he suffered as much as me.

"'Never mind Joe,' said he, 'we'll soon reach the Heely, and thar's plenty fish in the stream. But ef we don't catch any—why then, old fellow, we'll make meat ov old grizzly here. I did want to save him to tote the gold; but I s'pose he'll hev to die.—Hello! yonder's the Heely, by heavens! Wa ugh! now my boy, put yer best foot forward!'—and puttin' whip to his poney, I reckon Bill forgot all about bein' hungry; for like many of these're fellers in the diggins here, the thoughts ov the gold drive out everything else. But to tell the truth, I didn't b'lieve much about the story Big Bison had been stuffin' Bill with, and always told him so. But he'd never listen to me about it. Well, we hurried down the hill toward the river, and had almost reached it, when we heered one ov the savagest hellabaloos—and the next minnit about two hundred 'Paches (Apaches) dashed up outen the gullies on each side ov us, and afore we could look about us, rattled a shower of arrows inter us, thick as hail-stones. Old grizzly put out double quick, with the packs, and his hide full ov arrows; and we never seen any more on him. My horse was chock full on 'em too, and I had a couple or so inter my own carcass. But Bill and his horse was in a worse perdicament than me. He, poor fellow, had a shaft stickin' outen his side, two in his thigh, and an ugly gash across his face; and the claret was runnin' cruel.

"'*To the hill ag'in, Joe!*' roared Bill, as he spit the blood outen his mouth and throat, and kickin' his heels inter his mustang, led the way up the hill, towards a big pile ov rocks. When we reached 'em, we found the yelling savages close upon us, but jumpin' from our nags, I gin the foremost one a dose from old killbuck, that sent him to kingdom come; and arter I had loaded up ag'in, Bill fetched a couple on 'em with one shot,—then while he loaded, I gin it to another of the cussed devils.

"This made the 'Paches think we was *some*, and they hustled outen the way as fast as they come. They took cover in the gullies ag'in, and arter holdin' a council o' war, begun to surround our little fort, as Bill called it. This gin us time to pull out the darned arrow heads,—and I reckon they didn't come very pleasant nuther. That ar' one in Bill's side must a gone through the ribs inter the holler, for it pulled mighty hard, and come out with the meat and bone altogether on't. Well, when I had cleaned Bill's carcass, he turned round, and gin me a goin' over. What was cur'us, all the time we fit the Injun, was, we didn't feel 'tall hungry—fact was, we was too mad!

"We hadn't more'n got rid of the darned arrows, when the Injuns raised another yell, and gin us another round; but we watched the chances, and picked off the bravest on 'em as fast as we could load and fire. Well, I reckon, that day we must 'a wiped out at least twenty ov the varmints, and they begun to get mighty sick of the fun.

"That night it so happened (a thing oncommon in that 'ar starvin' country) thar come on a big rain storm that driv the cusses outen the gutter, and Bill and me took advantage on't, and stole slyly outen our fort, and made tracks for the mountains. In course, we had lost our hosses; and that night, you'd better b'lieve, Doc., wa'n't very pleasant to us, with our bodies full ov wounds, and our in'ards empty as a powder horn with the bottom knocked out and the stopper lost. Hows'ever, we'd our good rifles, and a tolerable supply of shootin' doin's, and we didn't despair.

"Next morning, I was for strikin' out for the Mexican settlements ag'in. But Bill said he wouldn't give it up so,—he ment to reach the Heely, and try his luck with the 'yaller sand,' yet. He wa'n't goin' to be backed out by the cussed Paches, arter we come so fur; not he! He reckoned, arter a day's rest, his wounds would permit him to travel ag'in towards the mouth of the Francisco.

"'But, Bill,' said I, 'old hoss! do you forget we're starving, and lest we don't want to leave our carcasses to the cayotes, we hev to be movin' whether no.'

"'That's a fact, Joe,' said he, 'I'd almost a forgot that. Well, old feller, suppose you take old killbuck, and try to find some game here among the rocks, while I *keep camp*,' and in spite of his pains and wounds, Bill laughed loud at the mention of *camp*, without an animal, or even a blanket atween us, to spread on the ground, and we without food of any kind for so long time—savin' the *panale*.

"Well, I started out among the barren hills, and looked bright for game, as well as them blasted Paches; but I seen nothin ov either. The Injuns was on a war trail, and I reckon, arter what we'd gi'n 'em, they was content not to track us, and moved off in the direction of the Ryo Grandy settlement. So, late in the day, I turned towards the spot whar I'd left poor Bill. I was mighty down in the mouth; for I hadn't seen a thing, but three or four ov them horned frogs, and about a dozen locusts; and these I was carryin' back for our supper.

"But afore I got in sight of the camp, I seen a smoke, and pretty soon arter, I smelt somethin' that reminded me ov beaver tails and buffaler fleeces. I tell you, Doc., that 'ar was about as nice a flaver as ever tickled this child's nose.

"'What in arth's that?' said I, to myself, and broke inter a run for the fire.

"Thar was Bill, roastin' some meat on the embers, and eatin' away for dear life.

"'Hello, Bill!' says I, 'made a raise, ha, old feller?'

"Bill looked round sorter comical, and pinting with his knife, over among the rocks, answered:

"'Plenty meat over yonder, Joe, help yerself, old hoss.'

"Well, yer better reckon I wa'n't slow,—and drawing my scalping knife, I made for the place, and thar, sure enuff, was the hind quarter ov one ov them cussed Paches' hosses, that we'd a wounded, and his owner had left him behind to die. 'Twas mighty good;—and in about a couple ov days, Bill and I, was able to make a break ag'in, towards the Utah country, for we'd concluded we'd seen enuff ov the Heely country, whar a wolf even would starve. Arter we'd cleared the mountains, and got outen the prairies, we found plenty ov buffaler. We travelled slow, fed high, and got well fast, and by the time we reached the South Park ag'in, we was both cured ov our wounds, and ov gold hunting on the Heely

"But what made it harder on us, was the fact that that 'ar blasted Big Bison had been selling us,—old chaps as we was! His gold had never seen the Heely, but the old split-tongue had traded for it ov some ov these ere Californy Digger Injuns. But I reckon he paid for't good. I 'spect Bill Munson wears that skelp of hizen in his leggins to this day—ef he's livin'."

RETRIBUTION;

OR,

RODDEN THE GAMBLER.

BY MARY ORME.

"I know you are wondering what ails my hand," said the captain of our steamboat, who had appeared with his arm in a sling since we went on board, several days previous. We had made his acquaintance, and liked him, and had wondered about his hand, as he said, but not enough to ask the chambermaid, or the men.

"I am sick of running a steamboat," said he. "I want a plantation, tho' maybe some hand would 'cut up,' and give me as bad a hurt as this. It is no use telling everything to everybody, but I don't mind telling you."

"Seeing it's you," said my wife, smiling.

"Yes, 'seeing it's you,' as the peddlers say, I will tell you. I hope, Madam, you will not see any rough work on the river. My word for it, it would use you up mighty quick."

My wife was an invalid, and we were escaping from the cold and coal-smoke of Cincinnati, to spend the winter in New Orleans.

"On our last trip down," said the captain, "I observed a party on board that I did not feel very happy to see. I don't like snags on two legs. The party consisted of a young man, about thirty or thirty-five years old, with his wife and a young babe, and his mother. The young man was *hard*, decidedly. He had on a gray coat and pants, and purple velvet vest, with a massive gold chain strung across his breast. He had abundant black hair, which curled, and was redolent of macassar. His face was red and fluffy, and his eyes were black and wicked. He had been goo looking, or might have been, if his mother had not brought him up. She was a tall and stately woman, quite as tall as her son, about fifty years, or perhaps older. She wore a false front, and her forehead was shaved, so as to look larger than it was naturally. She was made up in the most careful way, so I can't answer for her age, and was dressed in the richest moire antique and the costliest lace. There was not a sin of the civilized world that was not written on that woman's face. I have seen a great many women in whom but little of womanly virtue and sweetness was left, but never one who struck me as being so bad as this gambler's mother. Yes, Madam, this was a nest of gamblers. The poor little wife was a trained stool-pigeon; even the baby was dressed to attract and win, if possible, the unwary. The wife was very pretty, but she seemed to my practised eyes a strange compound. She was loving, gentle and sweet, or would have been, in good hands, but she was also proud. She was dressed very elegantly, and had on a great deal too much jewelry for a steamboat. I might have thought her a real lady but for these ornaments, and I afterward discovered that her husband made her wear these trappings to render her more attractive to his destined victims. I saw, after a day or two, that she was dressed daily for display. They had come from Canada, so they stated, and were going to New Orleans. I kept my eyes open, and so did the chambermaid, who has been with me nine years. There was a gentleman on board who had pleased me very much, and with whom I formed an intimate acquaintance soon after we left Cincinnati, who interested himself in watching these people also. We had a young man on board, who was going to Memphis as master-carpenter. He was simple and honest, what we call green, and told his intentions, and talked of his means and his prospects much too freely. His name was John Greene. The gambler gave his name as Rodden, and the gentleman to whom I was partial called himself Browne. I did not think that was his name; he seemed to me to be an actor, or a private gentleman who was about to become one. When we were alone, he sometimes amused me by personating persons on board, or others whom I knew, in a very remarkable way.

"Rodden made a set at young Greene as soon as he learned that he had money, but not by noticing him at all himself at first. But he moved the wires, and the elder Rodden talked with the young man about his home, and his mother, and hinted at a sweetheart; and the young wife, who seemed to scorn everybody and everything but herself, spoke very sweetly to him, and gave him her babe to hold sometimes. I pitied that young wife and mother. She evidently loved her baby more than all things else, and feared her husband and his mother most terribly. Toward them her pride was broken, and she crouched and did their bidding. There seemed a constant struggle going on within her. Without her babe, I could conceive of her jumping into the river any hour. But with it, and for it, she would do anything to live.

"Rodden had made up his mind to rob the young carpenter, and it had to be done before we reached Memphis; and it was done, sir. He won three thousand dollars from him six hours before we reached Memphis. They had played for small sums at first, and Greene had won about two-thirds of the time. At first he had played with the female Roddens for candy and sherry-cobblers. After a time he played with Rodden himself, but he won most of the time, and became proud of his skill. He boasted to Browne that he had won thirty dollars at half a dollar a game. He had lost but five games in doing this. Browne tried to convince him that Rodden was getting him ready to pluck, but Greene could not be persuaded, the stakes were so trifling. He, however, promised Mr. Browne on no account to play higher.

"The night before we were to reach Memphis Rodden and Greene played late, and Browne watched them till he was tired. They did not raise their stakes, and won about equally, and he left them at eleven o'clock, and went to bed. Rodden then called for wine, and Greene drank, and rushed madly on his own ruin, doubling, trebling, and quadrupling his stakes, until he had lost his all. He drank himself to sleep, but they woke him rather early, as we were nearing Memphis. Instead of getting ready, he went up to the hurricane-deck, and took off his coat, vest, and neck-cloth. He wrote with a pencil on a scrap of paper these words:

"'TO THE CAPTAIN OF THIS BOAT—Rodden robbed me last night, when I was drunk, of three thousand dollars—all I have in the world. I am going to drown myself. Please thank Mr. Browne for me, and tell him I am sorry I did not hear to him.'

"This paper he pinned to his vest, and then jumped into the river. The alarm was given, and the men tried to save him, but he sunk before they could reach him. The paper was brought to me, and I spoke to Rodden about it. He became violent and insulting at once, and finally drew a bowie-knife upon me. I attempted to take the knife from him; he drew it through my closed hand, and wounded me most severely.

"The waiters pinioned him from behind, and Browne took the knife from him. We were by this time stopping at Memphis. He broke from all who attempted to obstruct him, and rushed ashore. His mother had their baggage taken ashore at once, and she and the wife left the boat in a very short time after Rodden had escaped. I could not be detained to serve the ends of justice. I got my hand dressed, and was glad to be rid of such dangerous people.

"And I have heard nothing about them since, but I shall remember the fellow a good while, I am afraid."

"And what became of Mr. Browne?"

"'We left him in New Orleans, and he has promised to dine with me while I am there this time, and I have promised to dine with him. Who he is or what he is I don't know, but I shall always remember his kindness when I was hurt, and the tender sorrow he felt for the loss of that young man.'

"'I will pay that Rodden yet,' said he, 'if I go over the world to do it. The avenger of blood ought to be on that fellow's track, and to shoot him down like a mad dog would be a kindness to society.'"

* * * * * *

The 5th of May I left New Orleans to return north, my wife's health being much improved. We went on board that palace of a boat, the ——. Almost the first person I saw was a woman, who exactly answered the description given by the captain of the mother of Rodden. There was the same stately presence, the same shaven forehead and false front, the same rich lace and moire antique, to which were added flashing jewels. Then there was a pretty, petite woman, with a babe about a year old, clothed in the same showy manner, and presently I saw the hard gambler, Rodden. There was no mistaking the party. The young mother and her babe looked ill; the old mother and her son looked flushed, and eager for prey. I noticed these people so much, that I hardly looked at anybody else, but the day after I started, I observed a particularly green-looking individual, with light, flaxen hair, an awkward slouched hat, blue pantaloons, that had a queer, home-spun look, and a gray coat. He had old yarn gloves on, which he never removed, that I could see, though they were sometimes varied by the substitution of awkward old leather or kid ones.

I watched the gambler, for it had somehow transpired that the awkward-looking customer with the gloves had been to the New Orleans market, with a large amount of bacon and cheese. I saw the same game played that Captain —— had described in the case of the carpenter. One day I observed Rodden and "Ike,"—so he called himself—together.

"No matter about my name, Mr., call me Ike. I'll answer to that till the cows come home. You can't come it over me, callin' me Mr. How do I know but you're one of them fellows that plays poker, and allus wins?"

"I never played but three games of poker in my life," said Rodden, "but I'll play whist with you for the drinks."

"No you *don't*. Look o' here, Mr.," said he, pulling down the lower eyelash, "do you see anything green *there?*"

"I know you," said Rodden, insinuatingly. "I would not undertake to cheat you, if cheating were my trade, as I am happy to say it is not. You have evidently cut your eye teeth."

"You don't say. Good-lookin', but ye can't come in. I shan't play for the drinks, nor for nothin' else. I promised Susy, when I come away, that I would not touch a *kaird* while I was off. You see five thousand dollars' wuth o' hams and cheese would not be no shakes at all with one of them fellers that plays poker."

"That's so," said Rodden. "You are wise."

"Yes, and my money is in the captain's safe, and that's wiser, and there 'twill stay, till a half an hour before I land."

"At——" said Rodden, suggestively.

"At—yes, *at*, but where at is you'll have to find out, for I told Susy I'd keep dark, and would not talk any more than was railly necessary. As to you, I would not mind tellin' you, for I took to you at onct. You are smart, but you can't keep a hotel, or you would not come at me about the *kairds*. You might a known by the looks of me that I would not play."

Rodden was persevering; the "verdant man" was firm, and there seemed little probability of a pigeon in this case. Meanwhile the young wife seemed more ill, more miserable, and more terrified every hour, and the old mother seemed more hard, proud and imperious. She would take the babe away from the mother, and keep it, and I believe pinch it, and otherwise maltreat it, simply to torture the mother. And Rodden never interfered with anything his mother chose to do. What a life that young soul was leading! What a fate was reserved for her child, and she seemed to me to have intelligence enough to "look before, and after." My wife was perfectly miserable at what she observed of the suffering of that poor little mother and her babe. One evening I heard Rodden talking to the gawky man about play.

"Look o' here, now," said he, "ef you ever say *kairds* to me agin, I'll pitch into ye. I am a man o' my word, 'specially when my word's pledged to Susy. But I have got my pocket full o' dice, and they aint loaded dice, nuther. If you want to play enough to bet suthin handsome agin my tobacker box, I'll play with you." He drew out a very ancient silver tobacco box, about five dollars' weight, and laid it on the table. Rodden sat down to business, and won the box—played again, and lost. Their first night was occupied with this box, which was lost and won many times, and ended by returning to the countryman's pocket.

"Smart fellow, but you can't keep a hotel, nor win my tobacker box," said he.

The next day they played again, and greeny lost his box, his watch, and thirty dollars. But on the third day he won, till I believe the gambler had lost pretty nearly all he had to lose, and the countryman suddenly refused to play any more.

"Not to-night, any way," said he. "I might be willing to play to-morrow, but I want to sleep with my pockets full one night," said he. "I allus put my own money in the cap'n's safe, but I'll keep this ere that was yourn in my bjrth to-night. 'Twill do me good."

"That man will be robbed to-night, and may be murdered," said I to my wife.

I had such a sure presentiment of mischief to the countryman, that I could not go to sleep, and at midnight, when I heard the man go to his state room, I knocked at his door, and said, "Will you allow me to speak to you?"

"I know what you're gonter say," said he. "But never you lay awake on my account. I aint a baby, and I know what that Rodden is gonter du, as well as you du. But he's barkin' up the wrong tree. Look o' here, Mr.," said he, and he drew a tremendous bowie knife out from the back of his neck, and turning his pillow, I saw a six shooter. "I reckon these ere will do his business, if he comes arter me and my winnin's."

I left the man, re-assured, and returned to my bed, but not to sleep. The boat went on her way with great rapidity; breathing her deep and terrible breaths, and seeming like some awful living thing. The Mississippi is always dreadful to me, but there was something unusually terrible now. It was swollen by the floods, and seemed like a vast sea, and if any serious accident happened to our boat, there seemed no chance for life to be saved. As I lay thinking of all this, I heard a step without. I knew that the countryman slept with his door open.

"I should choke to death at onct," said he, "if I could not get the air." I rose and lighted a lamp that I always had by my bed. I took the lamp, and went to the door of the countryman's room, which was closed. I was startled by the report of a pistol, and a suppressed cry. I opened the door. Rodden was lying on the floor, but he rose instantly. One of his ears was shot off, and his hand was cut across. He ran out at the door, and I had only time to hear the countryman say—

"That varmint!"

"Are you hurt?"

"Not a bit of it," said he; but he had a cut on the hand, which proved to be a slight one.

The gambler turned to find himself grasped by the porter, who had entertained the same opinion of his intentions that I had. He had seen him leave his room with his knife, and had followed him, thinking that he would find the door closed. The open door and the watchful countryman had made quick work, and before the porter could interfere he had seen Rodden strike, and then a pistol had been fired, and a blow given by the countryman. The wretch, Rodden, struggled hard, but we drew him into the state-room, locked the doors and bound him at our leisure. Loss of blood conquered him a good deal, though we staunched it as soon as possible. The porter went for the captain, and we consulted as to the best means of disposing of our prisoner. His wife was, doubtless, in a terrible state of anxiety, because he did not return to his state room, as she must have heard the pistol. I asked my wife to go to her and tell her the sad truth, that her husband was wounded, and a felon. She wept bitterly and said:

"Oh, what have I not suffered with him and *her?*" and then she said: "O, that I could return to my once happy home!"

"And why can you not?" said my wife.

Then she revealed the fact that she had married without the consent of her parents—that she had eloped with Rodden.

"You must return, and they will forgive you, and receive you gladly," said my wife.

"I must think, I must think," said she. "I dread most of all to see his mother."

"You need not fear her."

"She will take my babe from me."

"She cannot do that, neither will she wish to."

The poor wife wrung her hands and said: "O, I must think!"

The porter watched by the wounded and pinioned Rodden, while the captain, and I, and the countryman, consulted. And now I discovered that the man who called himself Ike, had, from first to last, been acting a part. He had removed his flaxen hair, and his old gloves, and he had on now, a handsome dressing gown. I saw how his delicately beautiful hands must have betrayed him, if it had not been for their ugly coverings. He told the captain and myself, that his name was Browne, though he was known in the dramatic world by another name. Then he told us the facts that I had learned on my downward voyage.

"I swore to avenge that poor boy, and I have kept my word," said he. "The law shall finish what I have begun, and if his poor little wife wishes to escape, she shall have the opportunity."

The poor little wife decided, under my wife's influence, to return home. The mother, when informed of the facts, did not seek to be burdened with her, probably because she did not wish to expend money for any one but herself.

The husband asked to see his wife when he learned that he would be lodged in jail at Maysville.

"It is all up with me, for the present," said he. "You had better go home, Lib., and stay with the old folks, and behave yourself. My mother is no fit company for you, unless I am about."

The little wife answered only with her sobs. She held the baby for his father to kiss him, but she did not offer him her own lips or cheek. He was not her tyrant now. She had found friends. She would escape. We took her to her paternal home, and saw her kindly received by a worthy father, and a most loving mother. Mr. Browne went with us, and left one thousand dollars in her father's hands, that being the sum he had won from Rodden.

Rodden was tried for a murderous assault with intent to rob, and was sent to the penitentiary for twenty-five years. He will be sixty years of age, when he has served out his time. His mother used her best endeavors to get him acquitted, without success. What became of her, after her son's incarceration, I never heard, but the little wife has become an exemplary woman, and a faithful mother, and regards her escape as little short of a miracle.

We have kept up the most friendly relations with Mr. Browne, and when he goes to Great Britain, in the exercise of his profession, we always feel as if our whole country were lonely without him, and we rejoice at his return, as if one of our own family had come home.

Do not wait for a change of outward circumstances, but take your circumstances as they are, and make the best of them.

DISCIPLINE.

BY ALICE CARY.

Dimple mustn't be a-spreading
Chairs and carpet with her toys—
Dimple knows when grandma's reading,
That she mustn't make a noise!

Hands so tiny and so chubby
Cannot hold the slippery ball·
Now she's playing rubadubby
With her feet, for fun—that's all:

Dimple wouldn't cry, not she;
She's a lady—she don't care;
She won't let her grandma see
She can pout—she wouldn't dare.

For she knows that it would shock her,
And how naughty that would be,
And that grandma wouldn't rock her
In the cradle—doesn't she?

What bad little girl is snarling
For her playthings? I don't know;
It can't be our little darling—
She don't tease her grandma so!

If she were a little older,
And would thus get mad and cry,
I would make that dainty shoulder
Tingle smartly—wouldn't I?

Come here, darling (See her scamper
Th' other way!) Oh dear, oh dear!
Where on earth did such a temper
Come from? Mother, aint it queer?

Don't you hear me? (See her running
Faster, and with louder noise.)
Oh, you little jade! you cunning
Beauty, come and get your toys!

THE ONE ERROR.

A STORY FOR YOUNG WIVES.

CHAPTER I.

THE FISHERMAN'S WEDDING.

Good morning, mate—a glorious morning!"

"Aye, aye—a right morning for a wedding!"

"Are you bidden to it, Dan?"

"Oh, aye! me and my dame, and the lasses; the lads is to row the bride's boat, for you know, I suppose, it is her fancy to be married at the old church at Bontryst; her father and mother both lays there, poor lass! Proud enough the lads be, I'll assure you, and proud my dame be of 'em—six as stout and handsome chaps as you'll meet in these parts. Be you bidden, Ben?"

"Aye, aye; and glad I'd ha' been to join the party, seeing the lass were always a favorite o' mine and my poor dame that's gone; but I had gi'en my word to go up Rockton wi' Jem Apsley's fish—him bein' laid up wi's bad arm, and I wouldn't break my word to the lad; but my lasses be goin'; and, to speak the truth, Meg's been a' yesterday in wi' Nelly, helping at the wedding clothes. I'd be bound, they two ha' never been to bed this blessed night, for I see the smoke comin' from the chimney afore daybreak."

"Like enough, mate, like enough! There be nothing on earth the lasses do take so kindly as the making of wedding-tackle; unless, indeed, it be the gear of the smaller craft—the baby clothes. But there's not a soul in the village but would gladly do a good turn for Nelly Heartsom; and it's no wonder, for a sweeter nor kindlier lass never set foot on these here sands."

"They ha' been long courting——"

"Aye, that were the lass's independence, just—she would not hear of launching, till such time as she'd got together all the wedding gear, and needful stores aboard—sheets and quilts, I take it, an' such like. To say the truth, mate, I be right glad the day's come, and she's to be made fast; for though the lass is true as gold, she's over-pretty and light-hearted to go alone in this world."

"You're right, mate, you're right; and there's been more than one hankering after the prize."

"Aye, Ben Stratton; and, between you and me, there were an ugly craft a-while since, that my mind did misgive me would run foul of our gallant little sailer."

"Saul Meghorn?"

"Aye, lad; now I love Nelly-lass like one o' my own, and, when I saw that she was not for flouting the black, big fellow, as she should ha' done, by one hankering after other men's goods, I up and spoke to her fatherly-like, Ben, as you might ha' done, and she laughed, and says she, 'I aint married yet, Master Rullocks,' she says—and then looked so pretty and merry in her way, you know, that makes a fool of a man; I couldn't for the life of me be angry; but it do pass my comprehension, it do so. There was she, loving young Franklen, with all her heart, and holding out the tip of her finger, as you may say, to that beetle-browed limb of the devil. Lord! but women be the biggest puzzles ever sent upon this earth to plague it."

As these good neighbors thus talked over the approaching wedding, Nelly and Meg Stratton were busily engaged in the little cottage of the bride-elect, (for Nelly was an orphan and lived alone,) in preparing their frugal breakfast; after partaking of which, they set at work to put the last finishing touches to Nelly's costume, being joined therein by Patty Stratton and the bridemaids. Before this momentous work was half done, Meg exclaimed:

"Good gracious me, Nelly, there go my brothers! and you not so much as your hair done!"

"They are going to the boat, now," cried Patty; "and they'll surely call here, to know if we are ready."

"*There!*" cried Meg for the last time, as she succeeded in the formidable achievement of hooking that "bottom hook," for which she had thrown into her ten fingers all the combined forces of her body; "*there!*" and she rose from her knees, and, over Nelly's head, looked in the little mirror. "Well, now, I do *declare!* upon my word, if you aint the tiresomest, unluckiest thing! What on earth *is* the girl crying at now?"

"Oh, Meg, I can't help it!" sobbed the bride, throwing her arms around the neck of Meg, who, on her part, despite the risk to the finery, could not refrain from an involuntary hug.

"I am so happy, and I do so love him, and he is so good, and I don't deserve him!"

"Well then you must try to," said her downright friend, kissing her, and giving her a slight shake. "I hope Aaron 'll box your ears if you don't behave. It's too bad, it is, indeed, Nelly; there's no telling what bad luck will come of it, crying over your gown and gloves, too—see here!"

But smiles were dimpling Nelly's sweet face as she went forth into her little parlor, which her friends had cleared and decorated with fresh flowers. A hum of approval which even the women could not repress, greeted her, as she stood blushing in their midst; and when Aaron Franklen came in (having given his friends the slip, preferring a less public mode of conveyance to his bride's home), all in his wedding clothes—plain, well fitting, suitable—and placed in her bosom one of those white rosebuds it was his custom to bring her, saying: "It is the last I'll ever bring you Nelly Heartsom," Meg, who was watching her, anxiously cried out· "For goodness' sake! somebody scold her, or she'll cry all the way to church!"

They all laughed; and at that moment sounds of music coming nearer and nearer, drew all to the window; then a joyous huzza burst upon their ears, and a little convoy of boats came into sight, rapidly rounding the point of jutting rocks, their white sails gleaming in the sun, their many-colored flags fluttering in the gentle breeze—the joyous notes of the full band awaking the willing echoes of the cliffs around.

That summer's sun shone upon no fairer nor more happy bride than she, who now walked, escorted by the gallant little crew and smiling bridemaids down to the boat marked as the bride's by the white flag and green wreath that decorated its prow.

In the next came the bridegroom and his friends; then that with the band; then another filled with those bidden to the wedding; then more and more, thronged with well-wishers and neighbors, who had made holiday to do honor to the occasion.

Over the blue waters, where diamonds glittered enough to furnish a million bridals, the boats danced lightly with their precious burdens; like white-winged birds resting on the waves; the streamers fluttered, the music struck up gaily; and again rose the triumphant chorus, as they bore away the maiden from the home which her own industry had reared, to the altar among the hills, the old church of Bontryst, some few miles round the coast, wherein Nelly had chosen—for the reasons I have named—to become the wife of Aaron Franklen.

The last fold of the bride's veil fluttered out of sight; the last white sail gleamed round the jutting crag that hid the little fleet from the village; and the groups and couples who had flocked to doors and windows, nay, down to the beach, to gaze, dispersed and withdrew, gossiping, by the way, to their homes.

Higher up—where the cliffs towered far above the little village inland, the wedding party long remained in view, and there eyes did watch, long, long after the village below and the inmates of the huts upon the beach had ceased to gaze.

If any there had turned their eyes upward, back from the sea, to those same cliffs, they would have seen, sharply defined, in dark outlines against the summer sky, the figure of a man, erect, motionless, gazing hungrily out to sea.

They would have lost him for awhile to sight; then, again, have caught him in view, dwindled to a line, a speck—even as they gazed, he would have vanished into nothing; for, as the wedding-party distanced the starting-point, and clearing the shore, went wide out to sea, or again reached inland to the smooth waters, that eager watcher had leaped from point to point, higher, higher still, to hold them in view, still gazing hungrily, greedily, after that fluttering veil, into that bridal boat!

Till it vanished—till even to his hawk's vision and agonized eagerness there was perception no longer, and the snatches of music on the breeze, the glimmer of sail in the sunshine seemed to mock him.

"Wretched man that I am! Have mercy on me! oh, merciful Heaven!"

He groaned as he fell upon his knees, with this piercing exclamation—lower, lower, and lower, till his face touched the ground, till he sank, like one paralysed, and moaned and uttered words inaudible—spasmodic bursts of real suffering.

"And it has come to this!—I shall see her no more, but as his wife—no more! *no more!* at all, for I cannot live and see her so!"

After some minutes he rose and gazed wildly out over the sea, but even the mockeries had ceased; only the steady, passive wash of the patient waves far below reached him.

"Why did I not seize her *then?* Why did I not, by one bold stroke, make her mine for ever? She dared not have returned after a night's absence! That proud young fool would have scorned her—she must have been mine—she loved me!—she as good as told me so, by actions and admissions;—I should have made her happy—oh! why did I play traitor to myself when opportunity was given me? Fool! miserable, wretched, hesitating fool that I was! why did I not avail myself of the last, the only chance?"

He paced to and fro hurriedly; he threw back his thick black hair, and seized his broad forehead in his hands, as if he would have hurled it from the cliff; his dark, deep-set eyes gleamed with living fire; his hot breath seemed to scorch his parted lips, as it panted through them.

"*Why* did I not?" he repeated, smiting his side heavily with his arm. "*Why!* because I am become a pitiful, drivelling, whining, abject coward, before the power of this girl! It was not enough that I abandoned a pursuit that I gloried in—forsook my fellows and the goods we shared; because in her eyes I might gain favor, and be an honest man—*an honest man!*" he sneered out the words bitterly, as if he mocked the speaker. "And this was not enough, but my arm must become nerveless, my heart turn to gentleness, my hand forget its cunning! Time was, when the sight of a village bridal would not have staid me in my path one instant. Am I become a coward? Saul Meghorn, who has dared the dangers of the sea, the fierce pursuit of armed men—who, with the gibbet facing him ashore, the night and tempest on the ocean, never yet knew fear—now shrinking from the meeting a few harmless peasants! Nay, it is not *that!* My love was lawful; why should it not have met with success? I would have made her my wife! I loved her! oh, how I love her, in spite of all! And she loved me—she *did*, she must! Why listen to me?—meet me?—receive my first gift—though not the others? But she *did* love me; oh, and I hoped, I believed, that the turning-point in my life was come—that the dreary past was done with—the dream! Oh, fool! idiot! miserable fool that I was!"

He paced to and fro again upon the rock, then stood still, drew about him the large, loose coat which covered his sailor dress, and replaced the broad hat which he had thrown aside.

"I said I would not see them as they returned—why not? If she loves me, she will be pleased; if not, that is but a small installment of what she shall feel. She made me love her, she let me love her, she gave me hope. *Lost!* I said; but *why?* Aye, that was in my puling mood; I am better now—myself again. She shall yet be mine—mine only. If I live—despite the gay procession to the church this day—if I live, my wife she shall be. To myself I pledge my word, and when did Saul Meghorn lie to himself?"

* * * * *

On the evening of the wedding, the landlady of that out-of-the-way little house, the Peep o' Day, started at the harsh tones which, with an oath at her tardiness ere she had comprehended the order, demanded some brandy to be sent in to the fireside, "in there," as the rude customer, pointing before him, strode on to the small parlor or tap-room (for it was the only one) within.

"It's Saul Meghorn come back," she whispered to her husband; "what on earth's he doing hereabouts again?"

"Spending his money like a gentleman, as he always does," growled her spouse; "that's enough for us, isn't it?" and he hastened to attend his guest.

"Take away the light! That will do. Leave me to myself!" was the hasty request of the stranger, as the obsequious host set down the liquor and a candle, and busied himself in sundry arrangements of the room.

"That'll do! go along with you—what vile stuff is this you've brought me? Is the last all gone, then?"

"Yes, captain; and, to tell the truth, I've been hoping and praying——"

"There, go, go! take the candle away, yonder's the light I'm best used to."

The man went, closing the door after him, and Meghorn remained, leaning his chin upon his hands, from time to time applying himself to the liquor, which he did not cease to grumble at, then gazing moodily out towards the beach and over the wide expanse of ocean, now flooded by that same silver light which was resting lovingly amid Nelly's soft tresses, mingling itself insensibly with the pure slumbers of the fair young wife.

CHAPTER II.

CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON.

It was a pleasant home to which Aaron Franklen had taken his beautiful young wife, and it was full of comfort. Happiness had reigned there many weeks; and now, on a balmy, golden autumn evening, from the window that was brightest, the broad glow through a scarlet curtain shed a rich radiance on the jutting rocks that fenced the cot on every side; and through the half-open door the rosy firelight playing over the well-ranged furniture within, gave token of a warm welcome, which the twilight, now turning chilly, made quite acceptable.

The young mistress of this pleasant home stood before a table in the outer room, on which was spread the preparation for supper; and, to judge by the odors which diffused themselves throughout the room, as from time to time she raised the lids of certain pots upon the fire, that supper would be worth sitting down to.

Aaron's old coat lay upon the settle; Aaron's easy old boots (cut down to house-shoes) lay on the hearth; it was Aaron's favorite dish was cooking now at the fire; and if you had asked the trim little wife, who made so prominent an object in this home-picture, was that her favorite color which so plentifully adorned her dress? she would have told you, "*He* is fond of it."

Aaron was *all*.

Sad, then, was it not? that as the hands moved slowly round the face of the little Dutch clock, and as log after log consumed, the pretty face grew grave, and a cloud came upon it, which even the sound of a quick footstep outside, and the hasty opening of the door, did not dispel.

Nay, that even the cheery voice, which made her heart leap, saying, "Here I am, Nell; I'm so sorry I'm late!" even that did not chase away the cloud.

Sad that, amid all the preparations for his welcome, she should withhold that which was more to him than all the warmth, and light, and good cheer on earth.

It had been her custom to meet him half-way in the room, and with a kiss, that said more than words, to give him welcome, as he folded his arms about her, and led her back to their seat beside the hearth.

Her heart yearned to do so now, with a double yearning, after his long absence; and she was punishing herself wofully. Why do women do these things, and try those they love dearest, and whom they know to love them? *I* cannot solve the riddle. Wiser heads than mine have been puzzled by it.

The heart of the weary husband sank heavily, as Nelly just glanced up on his entrance, and then busied herself with her cooking.

He went on to the fire-place, and as he changed his shoes, and hung up his out-door clothes—she generally insisted on doing this for him—he was thinking how hard for a man to be treated as if he were in fault, when he had, in fact, been very unfortunate to be kept so long from the home he was so fond of.

He came and sat down in his accustomed place on the settle. "I am vexed, Nelly, that I was so late; but you know it can't be helped. I'm bound to do the best I can, you know, for your sake, aren't I?"

He drew her towards him as he spoke and kissed her.

How she longed to return it! but she only passively received the embrace, and said:

"Do you mean it's through me you're obliged to be late?"

"Nay, nay, now, my girl, you know I don't mean anything o' the sort. Don't take it that way now, dear Nelly; kiss me, and be yourself, now."

She could not resist that, but it was a very cool reply indeed to his request. If the good husband had known how hard it was to make it so indifferent, he would have displayed less anxiety to make his peace, and not have entered so fully perhaps on the account of what had detained him. But he, good, honest fellow, could little understand the strange inconsistencies of a woman's nature; and when, though attending to all his wants with the greatest assiduity, Nelly affected indifference to his explanation, and during supper barely answered his observations, he at length threw down his knife and fork, and declared he could eat no more.

"Then you don't like it, Aaron! after me taking all the pains to get it, on purpose for you!"

"It isn't that, Nelly; the supper's good enough, but it isn't *that*."

He turned away from the table as he spoke, that she might not see the moisture which, despite his manliness, had gathered in his eyes.

And she, as she rose from the table and began immediately to clear away the supper, turned aside her head, and *smiled*, yes—a triumphant smile!

Yet her heart was aching, and never did she long more to twine her arms about his neck, and kiss the dear, sun-burnt face; she was only momentarily deferring the bliss of reconciliation.

Do you doubt the faithfulness of such a picture? I can only tell you it is drawn, line by line, from nature; and that it is thus, day by day, and hour by hour, that hundreds of women trifle with the greatest blessing Heaven can grant them—the love of an honest man. God alone knows why! Perhaps home would be too near heaven, without alloy.

It was not the first time Mrs. Franklen had played the petty game of power, and she was even now reckoning upon some fresh demonstration of warmth from her fond husband, under which she should gradually thaw her frosty demeanor, and be once more her genial half.

But she was not to be gratified.

Fishermen are not ordinarily skilled in metaphysics, and it is not wonderful if poor Aaron was somewhat puzzled at the strange inconsistencies of the woman he loved.

He lost faith in the certainty of home peace, in the worth of his own single-hearted devotion—nay, almost he doubted at times the reality of the love which could voluntarily inflict such pain. Still, these were exceptional moments to a life in which, blessed with her earnest, careful affection, Franklen believed himself the happiest man alive.

It was wonderful how the neighbors should have got any idea of the slight cloud upon the little home, seeing that neither Aaron nor Nelly would, to save their life, have let fall a word concerning one another, but of tenderness; yet too often an expression of condolence or sympathy, dropped involuntarily, testified to the general impression that, as the women said, "Nelly didn't make young Franklen the wife she ought to."

But the attention of the village had been for some time past directed to a much more interesting topic.

Saul Meghorn had returned and taken up his abode within a short distance of Sandcombe.

It was a solitary spot enough he had fixed upon for his residence, though the house was one in pretension considerably above the ordinary dwellings thereabouts, and in the most romantic part of the coast, on what was called Deepgang Cliff.

Rumor, which had assigned to this dark stranger fifty different characters—all black as his beard, and each deeper in hue than the last—soon began to alter her opinion, and Saul Meghorn gradually unfolded to their acquaintance as a mild-spoken, well-conducted man. Sunday found him at the parish church, and when a beginning so commendable was followed up by subsequent practice, Master Meghorn was voted an honor and a credit to the village, although the good folks were still somewhat in the dark as to his means of livelihood; but it had been ascertained he went from home one whole day in every month, and the public mind was tolerably calm in the idea that he went to "draw a pension, or something of that."

In the little throng coming from church, Meghorn had encountered the young couple, and had raised his hat, in token of which salute the young fisherman touched his own.

He was looking at Saul, with whom he had but a very slight acquaintance, and certainly did not see the downcast eyes and too-ready blush of his wife at this unwelcome reminder of her past follies. He might have felt the closer hold on his arm, and the involuntary pressure to his side; but a time had arrived when nothing is to be wondered at or accounted for which a young wife does or says, and Aaron was—or, according to the law established, was supposed to be—very proud, and very careful of the interesting invalid.

He was returning from a journey inland one evening, busy with hopeful visions of a future made brighter by thoughts of *her* increased happiness, not unmingled with certain financial calculations, when a voice, to which he had for some time been a stranger, hailed him.

"Holloa! Franklen, lad! why, it's ages sin' I see thee down yon. Well, and what hast thee been after? and how is't thee never looks in upon the missus now?"

Aaron gave but a cool greeting to the landlord of the "Peep o' Day," who had never been much of a favorite with him, and then, as he walked on the way both were going, expressed some surprise at the host being, contrary to custom, so far from home.

"Yes, it bean't like me, be it? but I ha' been to the town yonder, and I thought I'd take the easiest road, for I bean't so young as I were. But I say, Franklen, thee need to look sharp now after this pretty wife o' thine; I do hear Saul Meghorn be come to live hereabouts."

Aaron turned and fronted him suddenly.

"What do you mean?" he exclaimed. "How dare you name my wife in that way? What is Meghorn to her?"

"Easy, easy, my lad; don't fall out about words. I didn't say that he were aught to her—I only were joking like about that little matter afore you was married."

Dashing down the heavy basket he carried, the fisherman turned upon the publican, and seized him by the throat.

"Speak plain!" he shouted; "say what you mean, or that you are drunk; or, by all that's holy, I'll hurl you from the cliff."

"Aaron! Aaron! Franklen! *murder!*" gasped the old man, edging himself from the precipice by which their pathway led. "Don't strangle me, lad—an old man like me! Let me speak."

"Speak, then, and be quick," said Franklen, releasing his throat, but still keeping hold upon him.

"Why, I thought you knew—of course you knew—I wouldn't have spoken if I hadn't thought so—that they carried on, him and her——"

"Him and *who?* What the——is it you mean?" cried Aaron, shaking him.

"*Him?* Saul and your wife."

"It's a lie—a foul lie!" cried the young man.

"Oh, well, if thee choose to say so. I only know I saw 'em times out of mind on the beach and among the rocks there—ay, up by the Chine, by moonlight, too, of evenings. Why, I thought everybody knew it. Dear, dear, I'd never have said aught, if I'd known. They said it was but a toss up which of you she had, but there, it was nothing, lad—nothing—it's all gone and past. I don't want to make mischief—not I, Franklen, lad; and thee'll look in and see the missus—ay, do."

The young man had relaxed his hold, his arm dropped to his side, and he stood like one stupefied, as the old sinner went his way hurriedly, and at the imminent risk of his neck, looking back every now and then lest he should be followed by the man whom his evil tongue had stung to fury

But Aaron was moved by a deeper passion than revenge. Fearful ideas were coursing through his brain—his wife's captious manners, her assumed indifference to his endearments, her fits of remorse. With fatal facility he was connecting these with the revelation he had just listened to, and which was distorted and magnified by his own previously-vexed incertitude as to his domestic happiness.

Had all gone smooth and trustingly at home till now, he would have listened comparatively unmoved to the gossip of the old man—at least, he would have gone to Nelly, and calmly told her, and, with a rebuke at her former flirtation and concealments, have so dismissed the subject.

But here was a solution of all their past disagreements. She did *not* care for him—he who doted on her, worshipped the very walls that sheltered her—she did not care for him! she strove to hide the indifference she felt, but it would break forth at times—then she pitied him again, and *acted* love.

It was madness! He strode up and down the cliffs, within sight of his home—he picked up his burden—things he had purchased for her in the town—then, remembering some word or tone of the vile slander, he flung down the basket, and turned from the well-known light, the ruddy beacon that had so often gladdened his return. He could have cursed the informer—Saul Meghorn—himself—everything but her—he had loved her so long, so dearly! She was his life, his all; he could not lose her and live, he felt it—yet could he love her knowing her to be false? What should he do? Should he upbraid her with her deceit—could he? No! he would rather go to her, and ask her calmly, and in all kindness—did she really not care for him, her loving, hard-handed husband? Was her heart indeed another's?

He could rehearse no further; he must see her, must hear from her own lips his sentence.

Hurriedly he caught up the basket, as if it had been a feather, and dashing along the rocky path, was at his own door in a few moments.

He opened it as hastily, *but his wife was not there.* To be continued.

The most beautiful may be the most admired and caressed, but they are not always the most esteemed and loved.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A Young Lady informs us, on rose-colored paper with gilt edges, that she has determined, after much consideration of the subject, to appeal to us for aid in effecting a satisfactory matrimonial negotiation She is a young lady who has seen better days, but is at present dependent upon the resources furnished by a superior education, for the means of support. It is not *that*, however, which makes her wish to marry, nor is it the foolish and too common dread of old maidism, which influences so many women; "it is simply to gratify," she says, "that innate desire to be loved which is implanted in every human heart." She regrets that she is not rich, so she could endow her prospective husband with worldly wealth; but, *then*, perhaps she would be sought for her wealth alone and fall a victim to some heartless adventurer; so, on the whole, she don't know but she ought to be thankful that she is *not* rich, and she *will* be thankful—in point of fact, she *is* thankful. She is confident that she could contribute her share towards making a happy home for somebody; "and now," she asks, "will you not *help* me? I don't know exactly *how it is to be done*, but *that* I leave to the promptings of your sagacity." In reply to this affectionate creature, we must say that we will *not* "help her." We do not believe in using the columns of a newspaper to advance such business.

H. H.—This correspondent must be something of a general lover, or he would not find it difficult to make a selection. He says he is in love with two pretty young ladies; one of them (Edith) a brunette, with dark sparkling eyes; the other (Sarah) a blue-eyed maid, with a very pensive cast of countenance. Should our correspondent be dark complexioned, the fair beauty is the one he should select; but if light, the brunette, with her merry disposition, would suit him admirably. But we half suspect that he loves neither sufficiently to enable him to entertain decided views of matrimony; and he had better be cautious. Trifling with the affection of young ladies is a detestable offence, and one that is severely punished.

Ellen.—Your position is certainly a difficult one, but we think you might easily rid yourself of the annoyance. You say you are about to be married to a man you neither do nor can love. Why not at once dismiss him? If his ugliness be his only fault, you would soon be able to conquer your repugnance; but marriage without love to start with is a cold affair, and in the majority of instances results in continued unhappiness, so that your best course would be to make him sensible of his presumption in that peculiar, freezing style which only your own sex know how to use. Be firm—avoid the man—and rely on the protection of your friends.

L. L. D.—The origin of the nickname Uncle Sam is thus related: During the war of 1812 there lived at Troy, N. Y., a Mr. Samuel Wilson, who was familiarly called Uncle Sam. This gentleman having obtained a contract for supplying the army with provisions, was accustomed to mark his barrels of pork and beef with the letters U. S. In Troy these letters signified Uncle Sam, but throughout the rest of the world United States. In the course of time these two significations were blended together; Uncle Sam and the United States became synonymous terms.

Uxor.—We do *not* believe in advertising for wives or husbands. We think it is indelicate, and in every way unbecoming. It is possible that a man might survive such a thing without particular discomfort in reflecting that he had obtained his wife as he had obtained other commodities, but it is hardly possible that a woman could escape experiencing emotions of the most poignant regret, and of the deepest humiliation, whenever she remembered that she had wandered from the path of feminine modesty, and put herself in market subject to the possession of the most satisfactory bidder.

Constant Reader.—Your friend appears to think that the rules of the ball-room are to apply to the church door. It is true, that a lady who is asked to dance, is bound, if unengaged, either to dance with the gentleman who asks her, or not to dance at all until the next dance is called. That is to say, unless she wishes and intends to put upon the gentleman who asks her, the most marked slight it is possible for her to bestow. At the church door, however, she is a free agent, and may decline the offered attendance of any one, without giving him just cause of offence.

Newark.—We agree with most that you advance on the subject of tobacco-chewing, but on one point you have been misinformed. It is so far from being true that no creature but man will consume tobacco, that one of the chief difficulties in the way of cultivating the plant is to keep off the tobacco worm. This worm is as much devoted to tobacco as the most besotted chewer of the weed, and will destroy an entire crop, unless the planter wages incessant warfare against it.

Lima.—Gun cotton has not been found to answer for fire-arms, and is not now used for that purpose. The only use to which it has ever been successfully put is blasting; but even for that, gunpowder is almost universally preferred. Its great bulk, the danger of accidental explosions, the dampness imparted to the interior of a gun barrel in which it is used, are some of the objections to it. Upon the whole, it must be pronounced an interesting but not very useful invention.

Alexander.—You ought to be thankful that the acquaintance has ceased. The girl who will not wait until her lover's circumstances enable him to marry her, must have a secret motive for her anxiety. It cannot be love, for love is timid, shy and delicate; and although it may not be passion, it certainly shows a want of forethought, which of itself is a sad defect in the young woman who expects to be a wife and a mother. Be not alarmed—the breach of promise was committed by her, not you.

Rutledge.—A clerk, we believe, cannot be compelled to make good the counterfeit money he may chance to take, unless he has agreed to do so. Some clerks are hired on that express condition. A clerk who understands his business, and takes proper care, will never take counterfeit money. An hour's study a day for two weeks will enable any one to defy the counterfeiters and all their works.

N. A.—No date can be assigned to the founding of the city of Paris, because a town existed on its site before the historic period. When Julius Cæsar conquered Gaul, 1800 years ago, he found a tribe on the Seine whom he calls the Parisii, whose chief town stood where Paris now stands. After capturing the place, he rebuilt and fortified it. It was a town of much importance before Cæsar saw it, and made a brave defence against his legions.

Baron.—As you have been introduced to the lady, and instinctively feel that you are not indifferent to her, pop the question at once. Delays are dangerous. It is the same in love as in war—hesitation provokes defeat. The exchange of fond glances may be very discreet and proper for boys and girls, but we have yet to learn that a grown up young woman ever despised a bold, candid, and respectful declaration.

N. K., when away from home, received the attentions of, and also some presents from a gentleman somewhat her superior in life; and upon her departure to return to the parental shelter, he promised to continue his visits, which he has never done. Such conduct is extremely equivocal; and as the courtship was clandestine, N. K. would consult her dignity and future happiness by unreservedly consulting with her parents.

Invalid.—Consult a physician. We dislike the practice of giving medical recipes, and, when we can, abstain from giving any advice. By waiting upon a professional man, he would have an opportunity of seeing you personally, and making himself acquainted with the features of your disease. That knowledge is denied to us, and it is chiefly for that reason that we hesitate to commit ourselves by any recommendation.

A Foreigner.—You need not be alarmed: if the young man possesses any common sense he will never trouble you again. An action for breach of promise of marriage cannot be maintained against you. It strikes us very forcibly that you have, although a foreigner, very soon learned the meaning of the old English adage, "Promises, like piecrusts, are made to be broken."

Hodaway.—In walking along the street with a lady, the lady should be allowed to walk on that side of the gentleman which is most convenient for *her*, and that side is usually the one farthest from the gutter. When the sidewalk is broad and unobstructed, it is of no consequence on which side she walks. At dinner, a gentleman can most conveniently assist a lady if she sits at his left hand.

M. M.—Perhaps only the *ruse* of a rival. Exercise your discernment, and judge for yourself. If the girl does really take a dram now and then, think no more of her. But caution is necessary, for the practices of a jealous, discarded lover are various, and not always strictly honorable.

Romulus.—Whether or not it would be proper for a young man to give his portrait to a young lady who asks for it, must depend upon circumstances not stated in your question, therefore we cannot answer you.

Rodolph.—For information respecting families in Poland, apply to the Russian minister at Washington, or to the Russian consul at a seaport. If these fail, address Count Gurowski, New York.

Henrico.—Seneca is the author of the sentence, and it means: "He who repents of having sinned is almost innocent."

Gunnery.—The *kick* of a rifle must occur at the moment of explosion, not when the ball leaves the barrel.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*